# The Saturday Review of Literature

VOL. XII NO. 12 NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 20, 1935 TEN CENTS A COPY

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JAMES HANLEY

*From a portrait by Earnshaw Greenwood*

"It actually seems as if British fiction had finally decided to come alive, and that the long, impeccable, plausible, passionless series of novels with which, for the last five years or more, English novelists have entertained us is now finally broken" . . . *(See page 5)*

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# One Frightened Novelist

BY E. ARNOT ROBERTSON

E. ARNOT ROBERTSON

LEISURE and character: these, apparently, are the main qualifications for the pursuit of letters, in the opinion of those not engaged in that pursuit. The proof of this is that the two questions most frequently asked of authors are: "I've always meant to have a shot at writing a book myself, but somehow I've never found time; however do you manage it?" and: "Isn't it awfully hard to keep yourself at it: I could imagine starting a book, but I'd never have the energy to go on to the end."

As far as I can make out, all authors without exception are asked these two questions at varying intervals, whether they are detective fiction kings or obscure producers of mathematical treatises. There are roughly three classes of authors: the "born-author" type, who is the person generally meant when the word "writer" is used vaguely; he is mentally incapable of doing anything else and quite unable not to write, even if publication were impossible and he could only keep a diary. Then there is the honest craftsman who would just as soon be a stockbroker or a hotel-keeper if he could get as pleasant a living that way, but wants to do his job decently all the same. And there is the hack writer who does not care what he writes as long as he gets the money.

I should say at a guess that about a quarter of the people earning their living as novelists are "born authors," which does not mean that they are born good authors: some remain bad all their lives, worse than most of those who competently follow the trade for a living. But the "born author" is the one to whom life is an opportunity for writing rather than writing a means of living; he may never be able to translate effectively into words all the nebulous ideas in his head; but they, not what happens in his outer life, are the real center of his interest; and while his heart can be broken by mundane events as easily as the next man's even when he is at the deepest levels of misery, one part of his mind is standing apart and saying, "Now do try to remember that this is how a man feels when his heart is broken." The "born author" cannot understand the more impersonal attitude to work taken up by the honest craftsman, who in turn cannot understand him; and neither can have any sympathy, save superficially, with the hack writer. But all three are required to think out suitably self-deprecatory replies to those strange, recurrent compliments on their enviable idleness and their endurance.

These two questions seem to mark the beginning and the end of lay curiosity about the craft of letters, if one except the other, but far rarer, query as to whether the author uses a dictaphone, or a typewriter, or dictates to somebody, or writes it all out by hand himself. But if it is limited, this curiosity is at any rate universal; in four continents, now, I have struggled to find something courteous and at the same time not too blatantly idiotic to say in reply to these inquiries; and I have, of course, failed, because if one is hampered by politeness or any regard for truth, there is no possible reply that will not make one sound either conceited or a fool. If I have not yet failed in the fifth continent to explain why writers write it is because I have not yet had the chance of seeing Australia; others, more fortunate in the way of travelling, report that there, too, the interest in these two aspects of authorship is just the same, and just as exclusive of any other interest as it is in Europe, America, Asia, and Africa. Odd.

Very occasionally, say once to every ten of either of the two standard questions—there crops up, "Do you wait for your ideas to come to you, or do you work regular hours?" but this is really a variant of the leisure question; as long as a writer has time to do either, lucky devil, it is assumed that inspiration must follow.

Why is it that, while practically nobody knows or cares how books get themselves written, practically everyone feels competent to lay down the law on their value?—"Wodehouse's stuff is much better than Sapper's; he's got Style."—"Darling, he hasn't; he's Funny."—"I know, but you can be Funny and have Style; at least Wodehouse can. That's why he's so much Better."—This I overheard in a lending library; neither of the speakers would have felt equal to passing an opinion on the proportions of a drawing, and if they had been asked whether they liked the appearance of a house they would probably have looked blank, yet they certainly went into more houses than they read books, and what with advertisement hoardings, and snaps taken of and by themselves, and the illustrations in fashion papers, they must also have seen more pictorial art than art of any other kind.

It is not familiarity, then, that leads

(*Continued on next page*)

## Next Week

DON FERNANDO
By W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM
*Reviewed by Henry Seidel Canby*

TEMPEST OVER MEXICO
By ROSA E. KING
*Reviewed by J. Fred Rippy*

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people automatically to believe themselves authorities on books though on no other branch of creative work, but, I believe, the general idea that whereas a sculptor works under incomprehensible stresses of pure intellect and esthetic passion, the writer, unless he is an exceptionally serious person, is working only to amuse or interest or at best both. And as the reader can easily tell whether he is amused or interested, he can equally easily tell whether the book is a good book or not, even without the help of "style," which makes the funny bits funnier and the rest more pleasing, so that naturally writers have it when they can, like the fortunate Mr. Wodehouse.

This attitude of non-familiarity-bred contempt for written art, as against other kinds, is summed up in the saying, "Talks like a book." That always means that the person described talks ponderously, flowerily, or insincerely, and therefore badly. The only man I ever met who actually said "Heigh-ho" when things went wrong was very much insulted when the phrase was applied to him, though his idea of apposite expressions must have come from his reading, and I suspect that the one thing which deterred him from saying "Pshaw" in answer to the charge was that whereas "Heigh-ho" is fairly obviously pronounced "Hay-hoe," "pshaw" is a bit tricky.

With the tiny minority of writers whom the public recognizes as serious it is assumed, on the grounds of their efforts to keep their characters convincing, that they are only trying to produce something which can be called "true to life"; and it is also assumed—on what grounds I do not know—that every reader knows all about life, so that even the serious writers present no difficulties of judgment to people who would hesitate to say whether they thought a poster a jumble of crude colors, or a particular bird's song musical.

The balance of rather ill-concealed contempt which most readers and most writers really feel for one another—apparently heaviest on the reader's side—is really levelled up by the inevitable egotism of authors, who could not write at all, I believe, if each of them were not—the "born authors" anyway—two quite different persons when planning and discussing work and when actually doing it.

Thinking of it in advance, they are generally as humble as the low esteem in which they are held by readers can possibly make them: they reflect with grateful astonishment that the lucky sale of the last book will keep them going nicely for a year and a half, so that they need not hurry with the next; they wonder how soon they can afford to experiment with that rather unpopular theme which they have long been yearning to try out in a novel; or else they are repulsively truculent, laying down the law on Trends in Modern Literature to anyone who will listen, and they may even be led on to dreadful remarks on What My Public Expects, and What I Intend to Give It: in either case the reader is in full view.

But when they finally get down to work, and stop drawing windmills and faces over the embarrassingly clean scribbling block on which most new books begin (I know of nothing more paralyzing to the imagination than a new writing pad that is waiting to be filled) the reader fades out suddenly, and with a completeness which would astonish that proud person. Financial considerations fall away, the unpopular theme becomes the only one that is not entirely pointless here and now, its unpopularity becomes, indeed, an aspect too trivial to notice; and if any born writer were capable of remembering the existence of other writers while in the midst of the excitement, despondency, and preoccupation of starting a new book, it would be only to wonder pityingly how they got along without this enchanting subject as a stimulus and companion. To the writer at work the reader—any reader but the private one sitting at the back of his brain who alone must be satisfied—is nothing but a gratifying and profitable irrelevancy.

Between spells of work, the doubts and hopes of success and understanding come back, but only in between. If an author remembers that last successful book while he is in his writing self, it is not with gratitude or truculence towards those peculiar strangers, its purchasers, but with mild speculation as to what the misguided people thought they saw in it to make them buy it, since no one could possibly understand the really important things about it except the person for whom it was written, its creator.

This is why the standard questions are so awkward for the author to answer: he cannot explain all this in reply to a query prompted half by such oddly bounded curiosity and half by the tacit assumption that he is a funny person probably unable to discuss golf, politics, or other normal topics with ease, so that in kindness the non-writers must come on to this ground. Wondering how a writer makes time to write seems to him a little like asking how he ever found the leisure to cut his first teeth, or by what means an epileptic gets a minute to spare in which to have a fit: writing, like these things, just happens to the born writer and takes whatever time it wants out of his life. And the second stock question—the one about getting to the end of a book in which he is living, while he writes, more vividly than in his real surroundings—this is like asking a diver who has just left the high diving board head downwards how he persists in his descent until he reaches the water.

All of which makes it plain, I hope, that it is impossible to answer the question: "What is a book?" For a book is bound to be a totally different thing to different people, particularly to those classes most interested in it, the three types of writer, and the reader. To most readers, I gather, it is a more or less competent piece of work which they might have done themselves, given enough of the primary ingredients, leisure and character. To the hack writer it is a financial tight-rope feat—how much pornography can he balance across the line of luscious sentimentality? To the honest craftsman it represents a quiet gamble on the intellectual stock market: he invests a certain amount of mental sweat in his belief that the public will welcome a picture of the private life of a taxi-driver or the seamy side of the Italian pension business, but having decided where to try for his dividends he will probably put a great deal of quite unnoticeable conscientious work into polishing up minor characters to please himself, and in contriving situations that satisfy his sense of reality, not only the public's. And to the "born author," if the book is his own, it is the focus of a mass of incompatible emotions.

He struggles with the certainty that no one ever had a better idea, that no one ever handled a good thing worse. That on

(*Continued on page* 14)

# Morning After

By KATHERINE GARRISON CHAPIN

OPEN the window, let the cold air blow through the rooms,
Clear out the talk that hung in the smoke of the cigarettes,
All that remains of the night, the warm glances, the fumes
Of furtive possession, the intimate touch, and the cloying regrets.

They were scattered and dropped with the ashes swept to the hearth,
The sharp brittle laughter broke and spilled with the wine;
The vague hungry passions were empty when run to the earth,
By the hounds of the music, following close with a rhythmical whine.

I have washed my hands in cold water and bathed my face,
And flung the evening away like shreds of a tattered gown.
I do not ask to stand always, untouched, in this place;
But never to burn with a false flame, nor in such dark shallow eddies to drown.

THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by The Saturday Review Company, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y. Noble A. Cathcart, President and Treasurer; Henry Seidel Canby, Vice-President and Chairman; Amy Loveman, Secretary. Subscription, $3.50 a year. Vol. XII, No. 12, July 20, 1935. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 1, 1879.

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# A Pioneering Novel

*THE FURYS. By James Hanley. New York: The Macmillan Company.* 1935. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

THUNDER on the left—or is it the right?—but thunder of good omen from whatever direction, disturbs the literary heavens this July. With the publication of James Hanley's "The Furys" it actually seems as if British fiction had finally decided to come alive, and that the long, impeccable, plausible, passionless series of novels with which, for the last five years or more, English novelists have entertained us is now finally broken.

Like most pioneers in the world of fiction, "The Furys" is far from perfect. Open it at the first page, if you meet with it in a bookstore: you will read this—

> As the woman approached the building she became aware of two things. First, that the wintry sun had appeared and was now shining on two great sheets of glass. Second, that an old woman was standing by the long flight of stone steps selling matches. She drew nearer. The two sheets of glass suddenly moved. The huge building opened its mouth and she passed inside. The uniformed attendant at the swing door stared after her. A rare visitor, he thought . . .

And so it goes on for page after page, an apparently monotonous succession of unrhythmical sentences, from which the graces and, it would almost appear, the inherent subtleties of language have been altogether exiled. I think this opening should be quoted as fair warning to those who expect some literary savor in their reading; to those, as well, who like a little cheerfulness and even a little humor to struggle into the fiction they buy. If Mr. Hanley's novel is distinguished, it is by an absence of any of these qualities. Moreover, anybody who is at all sensitive to the values of fiction may well ask himself—after reading some fifty pages of this peculiar prose—whether Mr. Hanley is blessed with restraint or cursed with inhibition; and whether his characters—for "The Furys" is a proletarian novel—should express their inmost thoughts in such a literary fashion as they are made to do.

One can only await the answers to these questions with extreme impatience. How will the American public and the American critics react to "The Furys"? I give my own experience for what it is worth—that, after I had struggled with great reluctance through the first pages, Mr. Hanley's amazing and progressive accumulation of minor detail, his almost *pointilliste* style, worked upon me like a powerful, an inevitable spell. It may be difficult to discern any elements of greatness in this novel, but it is impossible to deny that simply nothing else like it has appeared in British post-war fiction.

The Furys are an Irish family who live in an English port—Liverpool probably. They have been there for so many years that the Irish in them is a kind of useful memory—something to explain their own actions by, when their actions seem otherwise past explanation. One son is at sea, one son is a docker, the daughter used to work in a jute factory before she married, the father makes a little over a pound a week in a railway yard: they are obviously very poor. And yet, for seven years, they have supported a young son in an Irish seminary because his mother wished him to be a priest.

This is the harsh core of the story—that corrosive pride of extreme respectability which made the mother force her son into a seminary, and force her children to pay for his upkeep—thereby embittering both them and her, and slowly estranging her husband.

Grim as the tale is its background is no less uncompromising. Mr. Hanley does not go out of his way to shock or astound his readers: but the Fury misfortunes are underscored by the increasing mutter of a general strike, and by the appearance of certain lesser characters who, whatever else you may say of them, are not pleasing. They are rounded, they are human, they are vital; but they do not please. What a play Mr. Dickens or Mr. Priestley would have made with these same people! But when you leave Mr. Hanley's book you leave it with a sense of great intimacy with the lives of British workers; with a sense of having lived with them, in their houses and in their thoughts; and of never wanting to see them again. Is this the way to write a novel? Are we to suppose that the human soul, in poor circumstances, is at once so complex, so tempestuous, and so barren? Has Mr. Hanley any right to neglect those elements of richness which we know to be there? The answer, at this moment of writing, is still on the lap of fate; but I have a feeling that many thousands of American readers are going to say that he has.

*George Dangerfield, himself an Englishman, is literary editor of* Vanity Fair.

# The Farmer Goes to Hollywood

*THE FARMER IN THE DELL. By Phil Stong. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.* 1935. $2.

Reviewed by DUDLEY NICHOLS

PHIL STONG is far too kindly and humorous a man to rankle about Hollywood. Yet his latest novel betrays that he has a proper scorn for certain phases of the celluloid city, and one is aware that he has had his share of those perplexities and annoyances which beset every talented writer in the studios. Naturally they troubled him, challenged the artist in him, and he must attempt to set it down and get it out of his system.

What more effective way in fiction to expose the artificiality of Hollywood than to set it in dramatic contrast with a protagonist from the Iowa which Mr. Stong knows so thoroughly—a simple, candid, dry-spoken ploughman such as the Pa Boyer in this story?

Pa Boyer has retired from his Iowa farm to a stucco bungalow in Hollywood. He has the expectation of six hundred a year—not counting drouths—a wife Dellia who still cooks as if every day were harvest time, and a handsome, corn-fed daughter Adie. They are all common-sensible, attractive "folks." What happens when Pa gets into the movies and achieves sudden fame because he is the only man on the set who can drive a four-span of horses in an "epic" (a ten-dollar word in Hollywood) of the soil, makes up the body of this story, which is swift and amusing and surely designed as much to entertain as to take the measure of Hollywood. It must be recommended for laughter alone. Mr. Stong is essentially a humorist, with a wry edge to his laughter at times.

But if the author intended this tale as a critical picture of Hollywood versus Iowa, this reviewer would take issue with him. The dramatic shadings are too black and

FROM THE JACKET DESIGN FOR "THE FURYS"

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white; and there is more to the problem of the retired farmer than is set down within the pages of this book. Geographically speaking there is nothing the matter with Hollywood. Not so long ago the invisible gods lazed away long afternoons on the hills and mountains of that enchanted, strangely foreign land. That is unmistakable. The whirring of cameras, like the approach of a plague of locusts, may have frightened them off to the high Sierras. But certainly it was this present generation's migration of Middle Western farmers to that celestial region which made them take their final leap into the firmament, never to return to earth.

One never ceases wondering about that vast and formless horde of ploughmen who left the furrows of Iowa and Kansas behind them to follow west in family flivvers the old ox-trails of the pioneers and Forty-niners. Instead of looking at the stars over wide, dark fields they clutter up the gaudy porticoes of meretricious movie palaces to "see the stars" at premieres of pictures. They have incurably romantic illusions about this gingerbread life, just as Pa Boyer is excited in the opening pages of this book because he is sure "he seen Charlie Chaplin going into Henry's." They have left their significant life behind them and they have no new life to bestow on passers-by in this land abandoned by the gods. And how can one define a bore except as a human being who does not give out life as richly as he takes it in?

No, one decides that out of a sheer, nostalgic, uncritical love for his principal character—a venial fault in any author—Phil Stong has given Pa Boyer the advantage in this contest with Hollywood. Even though Pa is by Iowa out of Claremore, Oklahoma, the present writer fears he would find him and his eternally cooking wife and his healthy level-headed daughter unutterable bores.

*Dudley Nichols, a former newspaper man, has of late been living in Hollywood, where he has been connected with a motion picture company.*

# Democracy on Trial

*THE POST-WAR WORLD. By J. Hampden Jackson. Boston: Little, Brown & Company.* 1935. $2.50.

Reviewed by FRANK H. SIMONDS

WITH the exception of the books of the G. D. H. Coles this is the best general report of the post-war years that I have encountered. Its author, Mr. J. Hampden Jackson, is History Master at Haileybury College, England. His aim, as he explains in his introduction, is "to make the history of the world in the post-war years intelligible to the ordinary newspaper-reading man." He expects, so he confesses, to bore the specialist and to anger the partisan. In the main he has been sufficiently successful in achieving his major purpose to escape both dangers.

Where Mr. Cole is a socialist, Mr. Jackson is the type of liberal who on this side of the Atlantic is described as a "New Dealer." In fact, under the gown of the Don beats the heart of a "braintruster." Closing his narrative last year, he asserted that in the conflict then in progress in the United States the fate of democracy everywhere in the world was at stake. And he continued—

> If the democratic government of Roosevelt should succeed in inducing citizens *by persuasion* to forego the rights of free competition and to combine to raise the purchasing power of the community in general, and in particular of the working class which comprised its vast majority, there might be a future for democracy all over the world. If Roosevelt failed, if individual interests refused to coöperate, then two alternatives would be open in America; a return to *laissez-faire* which would mean further descent down the 1929-1933 road or else suspension of the Constitution and rule by coercion.

In 1934, therefore, Mr. Jackson concluded that "democracy was on trial for its life in Washington." The United States like the rest of the world was passing through its "Second Revolution." The first, that of 1789, extended popular control to the sphere of politics but was never completed, "since it found no way of giving expression to the *volonté générale* as distinct from the *volonté de tous*. The vital problem of the post-war age has been to experiment in new ways of expression of the *volonté générale* (via communism and fascism) and to make one more turn in the spiral of progress by a second revolution, which has for its object this harnessing of economic activities with the reins in the guiding hands of the community."

Precisely what that mysterious animal "the ordinary newspaper-reading man" will make of the *volonté générale* is doubtless a matter of conjecture, but for Mr. Jackson it is plain that what the Supreme Court has done to the New Deal must constitute the passing of a sentence of death upon democracy. Perhaps he suspected what was coming, in any event he ends on the sly note—"There is no need to emphasize the fact that the second revolution was far from complete in 1934." Even John Strachey could subscribe to this statement.

In the main, however, Mr. Jackson is a reporter rather than a revolutionary, even of that type which plumps for gradualness rather than for guns. He is occasionally caustic, but generally his academic tone is flavored by the placidity of "Mr. Chips." And when he gets at his story he is more concerned with telling what happened than with trying to fit events into any personal dogma or political doctrine. When he comes to the great depression he says quite frankly that "nobody knew the cause of the trouble," but he ventures to suggest that "out of the crisis grew a recognition that the old idea of Western supremacy had been based on a false foundation, that industrial riches could not be converted into communal wealth by the oppression of class by class and of nation by nation."

The various "revolutions," the Fascist, Communist, and National Socialist, like the Roosevelt affair, intrigue Mr. Jackson and there is a true note of "Chipsian" in the tolerance with which he views them, identifying in all four something of a common objective. He belives Fascism will have much to answer for to posterity, but he can't help feeling that Mussolini found his Romans organ-grinders and will leave them citizens of a country for which, if there is little compassion in the outside world, there is less disdain. He credits Hitler, Goering, and Goebbels with having done for Germany what Stein and Scharnhorst had done for Prussia after the Napoleonic War. His chapters on vic-

*Acme*

PHENOMENON OF THE POST-WAR WORLD

*Bayonet Practice for Italian Boys. From "Eyes on the World" (Simon & Schuster).*

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torious France and the difficulties of post-war Britain are quietly informative. He views French problems with a more generous understanding than do most Englishmen; his observations upon British politics are singularly dispassionate. The portions of the book dealing with Asiatic and African problems are particularly good. As always revolution, this time in China, claims his deepest attention.

It is a relief to find the League of Nations appraised realistically. It was, in 1919, "a pious hope." Mr. Jackson is not fair to Woodrow Wilson or familiar with the facts, when he charges that at Paris the American President "put the League of Nations, his Fourteenth point, first on the agenda and worked for that, shutting his eyes to all else." Surely the English schoolmaster must have read of Wilson's battle over Fiume. He is not less inexact in stating that "Clemenceau . . . had to resign in 1919 and the fire-eating Millerand became premier." Actually Clemenceau chose his own date for the dissolution of the wartime Chamber, and Millerand was his choice as a successor. Americans, too, will be surprised to learn that the Washington Naval Conference prevented a war, whether with Britain or Japan does not appear in the text.

Reverting to the League, "whose functions have become those of a club or newspaper," Mr. Jackson recognizes that in the critical years following the onset of the "economic blizzard" the conference method failed. He is shocked over the League's impotence in the Manchurian Affair. By the end of 1932, he notes Geneva had been just as unsuccessful in the economic and financial fields. He is more than normally severe about the Roosevelt performance in respect of the London Economic Conference.

In the end Mr. Jackson, having heard and recorded the evidence of the pessimist with the exactitude of a realist, refuses to be "downhearted." Thus he writes, "the old joint-stock company had ceased to be the unit of production, and its place was taken in communist, fascist, monarchic, and democratic countries by the public utility corporation, a form of enterprise run by experts in the public interest." If he had been an American, Mr. Jackson would probably have used some other figure of speech to describe Utopia, for the citizen of the United States does not instinctively think of a public utility corporation as a symbol of progress toward the New Deal.

One should repeat, however, that Mr. Jackson does not too often intrude with his personal opinions. He has written a straightforward, unprejudiced, and workmanlike account of the tangled history of the post-war period, which the student of these years must find of the greatest use.

*Frank H. Simonds is one of the best-known of American foreign and war correspondents and the author of a number of books on international relations.*

THE RADIO ROOM AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK
*From "Modern Criminal Investigation."*

# The Policeman's Laboratory

*MODERN CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION. By Harry Söderman and John J. O'Connell. New York: Funk & Wagnalls.* 1935. $3.

Reviewed by COURTNEY RYLEY COOPER

THE growth of science in police methods within recent years has been so gradual that the average citizen little realizes the scope of it, saving his enthusiasm for works of detective fiction when perhaps more exciting events are transpiring in the headquarters of his own municipal police force.

Tradition dies slowly. City detectives, to fit average conception, must either be numbskulls or talk out of the sides of their mouths. Patrolmen must be Irish, and often, illiterate. That there should be career men in law enforcement, college graduates, persons able to pronounce long words like "dactylology" or "poroscopy" and know what they mean, may appear to the straphanger to be impossible.

That they do exist, however, and that they are slowly coming into the majority, is evidenced by the publication of "Modern Criminal Investigation," by Dr. Harry Söderman, European criminologist, and Deputy Chief Inspector John J. O'Connell of the New York Police Department. Here, better than in anything else recently printed, is the proof that police departments are meeting the problem of the modern day criminal with ultra-modern methods.

The issuance of the volume means that the police departments are studying crime from an entirely different method of approach from those good old days when theory and practice consisted of "hittin' 'em on the head an' takin' 'em down to see th' Chief." Today's researches are concerned with psychology in the questioning of suspects, the application of modus operandi in criminal activities, the extension of fingerprinting knowledge for purposes of identification, the theories of ballistics in determining the identity of guns and bullets used in crime. There is the sketching of crime scenes, photography for reference work in court testimony, and reconstruction of foot or tire prints, or facial characteristics in the skeleton of a murder victim. Laboratory work is necessary to bring forth fingerprints, or to determine blood stains and the validity or identity of questioned documents. All these aids to successful man hunting are entering more and more into law enforcement work, and this book is designed to tell what every good policeman should know. Often, in the case examples, the story is thrillingly told.

Moreover, the book is designed to tell what good citizens should know; any man who believes himself interested in the welfare of his community should read it, absorb it, trust to it to aid him in his daily contacts with strangers, and show him the means of protecting his home and his loved ones. Even better, it will give the average citizen a gauge by which to measure the efficiency of his own police department; without such methods as "Modern Criminal Investigation" describes, no police department these days can be wholly efficient.

That every law enforcement official should read it, goes without saying. And if every writer of detective story fiction, every playwright, every script-author would give it the attentive study it deserves, perhaps there would be fewer unfair book, stage, and screen caricatures of the modern cop.

*Courtney Ryley Cooper, journalist and short story writer, recently published a book on the methods of the United States Department of Justice in following up crime, entitled "Ten Thousand Public Enemies."*

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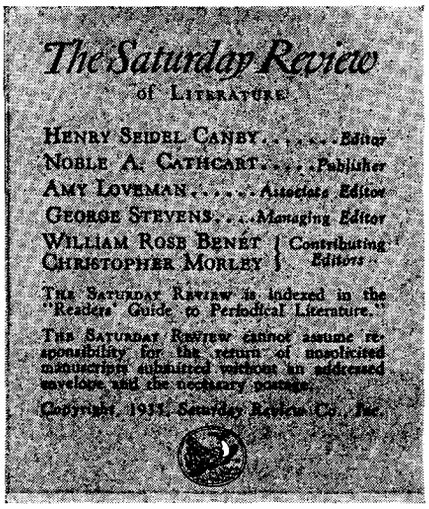
The Saturday Review
of Literature
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The Saturday Review is indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."
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## The Pulse of the Machine

THE standardizing of the modern world is much more superficial than it seems. Auto-busses rattle down the passes where the Spaniards drove the Moor, but the peasants who ride in them are not changed by speed, and an hour later will be swaying donkey-back on the last lap homeward with the same Spanish thoughts, the rhythm of their lives no more speeded than the steps of the ass whose ancestors bore the Phœnician over the same road at the same pace. Black-haired, blue-eyed girls on the quay of Split, and white-robed Arab women from the Atlas in the garden park of Tetuan, listen to the same jazz blared from a loud-speaker in a café, and are so little likened thereby that the vast differences between them reveal their importance. The scientific mind, classifying, identifying, defining, has missed subtler distinctions in temperament, and in the pressure of emotions, which are prepotent in life—as the uncontrollable illogicalities of nationalism show.

From a point of neutrality, let us say in mid-ocean, where the waves beat a thousand monotonous miles with only a shift from gray to green to blue, the intricate influences of regions of land seem to be imagination distinct and are perhaps over-simplified, like mountain ranges on some continental horizon. It was a sound instinct which led some literary critic to substitute the word "regional" for the old nineteenth-century term "local color." It is much more than color which a region imposes on a race, indeed the "color" of regional writing is too often no more than quaint details of speech or dress which the incapable author describes because he cannot grasp the real characteristics beneath, which are so different from his own.

The influences which mould temperament, and therefore social relationships, religion, and art, and especially the art of literature, are still chiefly natural. Wind, rain, sun, plain, valley, mountain, in their combinations and permutations, are assuredly the sculptors of habit now as in the past, even in cities. This cannot be proved, but it can be felt, and has been felt by everyone who knows sensitively Chicago, New York, London, Paris, and Madrid. But it is easy to prove the potency of climate and physical environment beyond the boulevards. No race stays the same in Andalusia, Indiana, and Ireland.

The importance of these regional distinctions in literature has been often discussed but seldom carried beyond an analysis of local peculiarity or a dubious statement of facts of resemblance between torrid heat and torrid expression, or drab horizons and drabness of thought. **The real importance of environment does not lie in what of stimulus or depression, or of color or its lack, or even in the beauty or the ugliness, it contributes, but in a fortunate balance between that which is shaped and the shaper which does** not come often and when it comes is decisive. It is not length of days in a land, though that helps, or (in this argument) the innate capacities of peoples, about which we really know very little, but rather some fortunate moment of time and place when with the synchronizing beat of a perfect machine the race becomes at home in its country and the country in its race. For such a statement the tritest example is best, which is Greece, since everyone knows Greek architecture and Greek sculpture, and yet no one knows either who has not seen them at home. It is a tribute to the genius of the creators that the streaked and lightless Elgin Marbles in the British Museum should be powerful and the Iliad stir the imagination even in English and in the North. But it is no explanation of Grecian art, for that is inseparable from the gray, shimmering light in which, if not for which, it was created. An arch of the Parthenon was as truly built to enclose an arc of inward glowing Hymettus or a span of purple sea and violet mountain as to carry the roof which housed Athene. Somehow the balance came true for a century or so between the land and its people, and the art which expressed it derived its rhythm from this fortunate harmony. For it is not too much to say that the mountains and the seas and the valleys of Greece are composed as the sculptors of Greece if they had been at the making would have arranged them, so that one rubs the eyes to be sure whether one sees the background of peak, vale, and curving inlet through the powerful and transforming vision of the artists, or the art of Greece as a refinement of its background. Both visions are true.

**Books in England**

The Spring book season in England has been bad, small sales, and a feeble interest that showed no signs of reviving until Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom" was offered for advance subscription. For that a single London bookseller had taken in 1200 orders before the first of July, although publication will not be until August. The two reasons usually proffered for the unsatisfactory nature of the publishers' season are interesting because they seem to have little relation one to the other. The questioner is told everywhere that the Jubilee, which is being hailed as the great reviver of English trade, killed the book market. As soon as the preparations for the Jubilee began, the sales of books fell off and have not since recovered. Book readers, apparently foreseeing endless expenses and urgent requests for contributions, decided to save on books. The other reason is a different story and is much more like a common complaint of writers upon books in America. There has been, so these others said, a scarcity of really good books that are also readable books. The younger generation of English writers (it is a shrewd bookseller who is speaking) are too academic in their training and their outlook. They cannot get upon that wave length which reaches the general reader. They write in a corner, for those in a corner. As for the older writers, they write extremely well, but they have nothing new to say. Their books repeat—they are full of highly competent staleness, of old patterns skilfully redrawn.

Of course there never is only one reason why books sell or do not sell. A Jubilee or a Presidential election is quite enough to divert the minds of the readers upon whom authors count for their living. And yet, and yet, books as well as times can be out of joint, can fail to be the right books for the real interests of the moment, or if right, not good enough. We forget that even the distracted war years had their crop of best sellers. The violent emotions running then were certainly subversive of quiet, and yet again and again in those four years some book like "Mr. Britling Sees It Through" caught the rhythm of the time and swept into edition after edition. It is not a sufficient alibi for writers that too much is happening in the world.

### Ten Years Ago

In the issue of July 18th, 1925, The Saturday Review recommended "The Mistress of Husaby," by Sigrid Undset. Allen W. Porterfield, who reviewed the book in that issue, wrote: *"This is a very great novel, a really outstanding importation. . . . a novel which depicts through its host of scenes and characters, the adolescence of a nation."* "The Mistress of Husaby" is the second volume of the trilogy, "Kristin Lavransdatter," after the publication of which Sigrid Undset was awarded the Nobel Prize. Her latest book, "Long Memories," is to appear this fall.

### Today

The Saturday Review recommends these new books:

THE FURYS. By James Hanley. See review on page 5.

THE POST-WAR WORLD. By J. Hampden Jackson. See review on page 6.

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# Letters to the Editor: *More Reports from Unknown Readers*

*Herewith the second instalment of letters on current reading. We regret again that space does not permit printing all letters in full. A third selection of comments from Unknown Readers is planned for an early issue.—The Editors.*

## Noble Experiment

SIR:—After reading the first batch of book review letters which you recently invited, pruned, and published, I feel inclined to vote this use of your columns a "noble experiment." It is the very unprofessional character of these comments, including their frankly personal, literary idiosyncrasies, that gives the column its delightful variety.

I have just read "John Brown's Body," that kaleidoscopic picture of a tragic epoch, written in every poetic form from light, amusing doggerel to moving blank verse of intelligence and dignity. Two slender volumes of verse with notable similarities have given me much pleasure, Millay's latest, "Wine from These Grapes," and Audrey Wurdemann's "Bright Ambush," which wears the bright band of distinctive award. Not only in their deft, crisp diction, but also in certain moods of disappointment or of detachment these two poets seem to me much akin.

I have been fascinated by the "Seven Gothic Tales," stories within stories, spun with ease and artistry, combinations of beauty and horror, ironic sanity and utter madness, unlike anything else I know. I have for the first time read an Edna Ferber novel with interest. It is "Come and Get It," narrative as melodramatic as the front page of a newspaper, which I began with distrust but ended breathless and capitulating. My list of fiction concludes with "The Fountain," by Charles Morgan, a philosophic romance, and "Jean-Christophe," by Rolland, which I consider a marvel of emotional detail.

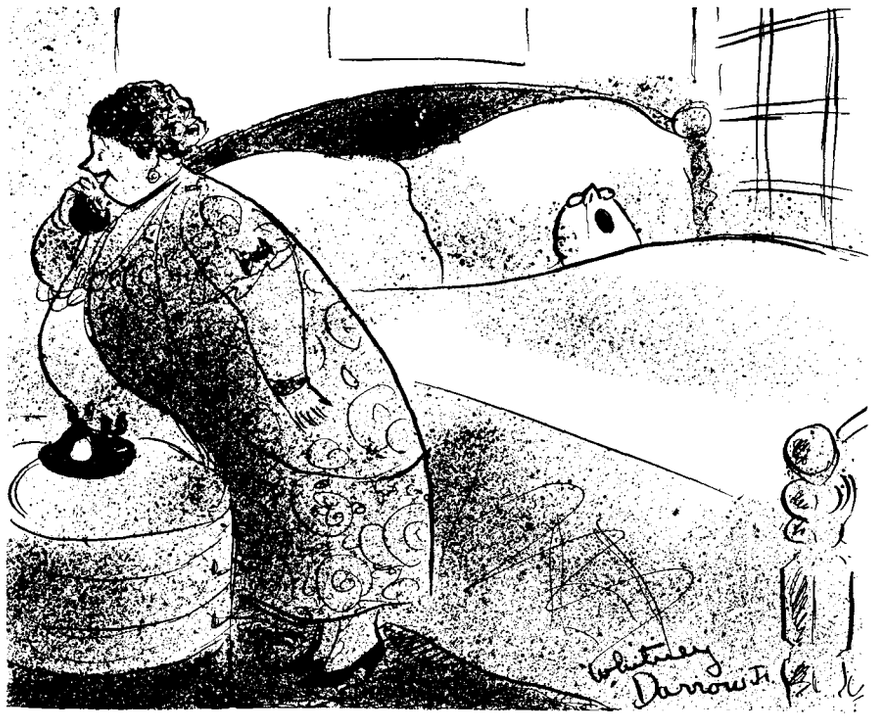
Havelock Ellis's "The World of Dreams" and Adams's "The Epic of America" represent my ventures into non-fiction. Both succeed in being literature, even though instructive, one in the realm of the subconscious, the other in the scarcely less mystifying world of American thought and action.

ANNE WOODWARD KING.

Washington, D. C.

## Value of Irony

SIR:—Master Clifton Fadiman, the bright lad of the *New Yorker* (who needs to be told about "Children should be seen . . ."), kept refusing to like "Anthony Adverse." That's recommendation enough for me. So I read this one long after it had become a best seller. Another book that robbed me of sleep for two weeks handrunning was "Of Time and the River." When Tom Wolfe learns how to condense and revise, he'll be truly great. Or maybe he won't. Maybe he'll stop being Tom Wolfe. And that would be a crime. In detective fiction I've belatedly gulped down "Fer de Lance." Stout has something on the mystery-ball that no one else possesses. He's actually literate.



"I'M SORRY, BUT MR. MORTON IS WORKING ON HIS DREAM BOOK."

For non-fiction, Gibbon's "Decline and Fall" with the pious, hand-raising notes of Dean Milman. Also F. A. Spencer's "Beyond Damascus." This is the only civilized biography of St. Paul I've encountered. In tone it much and not unworthily reminds me of Gibbon. So does the third non-fiction work I've liked recently, Hans Zinsser's "Rats, Lice and History." I've always thought biologists were the most humane of scientists. Now I know it. Gibbon I came back to after an interval of some fifteen years. The other two books I found by means of, respectively, Elmer Davis's appreciation in the *New York Times* and Haldane's subdued British trumpeting in the *Saturday Review*. I'd admire to discover more writers who know the value of irony and don't get all het up about "this changing world of ours."

PETER RATHBUN.

New York City.

## Votes

SIR:—May I cast a few votes in your plebiscite of reader opinion?

Best Novel of the Winter: "Follow the Furies," by Eleanor Carroll Chilton.

Runners Up: "Roll River," and "February Hill."

Narrowest Miss of the Season: "National Velvet." (Tried just a shade too hard to be *delightful*—but nearly made it at that.)

Most Attractive Author (judging by publicity): James Boyd.

Least Attractive Publicity Photograph: Enid Bagnold's hat.

Biggest Bust of the Year: "Of Time and the River." (And what a pleasure it was to hear your Bernard De Voto say so!)

And finally, as one whose fortunes depend on the mystery fiction field, may I take this opportunity of bestowing my own particular palm on Joel Y. Dane (colleague personally unknown to me) for his "Murder Cum Laude"? For length, variety, excitement, humor, and sheer grizzle—you can't do better than this comparatively unappreciated volume. Truth compels me to warn that the solution of the mystery is poorly motivated, but by that time you've had so much more than your money's worth you don't care.

COLVER HARRIS.

Spuyten Duyvil, N. Y.

## Hall of Fame

SIR:—I submit to your Hall of Fame, magna cum laude, the following books: Douglas Freeman's "R. E. Lee," Thomas Wolfe's "Of Time and the River," and Edna Ferber's "Come and Get It." These books I'm sure would remain in a reader's memory forever.

ROBERT GORDON FAUDREE.

Springfield, Ohio.

## Five Books a Month

SIR:—Congratulations! You have been brave enough to print what the ordinary reader is enjoying. Reading at least five books each month I always look to the *Saturday Review of Literature* for recommendations.

The head of the English department of Albright College recently said that Paul Engle was a poet who will be heard from. "American Song" verified that criticism. Next among my favorites is Thomas Wolfe who in "Look Homeward, Angel" and "Of

(*Continued on page* 16)

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# A German Prison Diary

*I WAS HITLER'S PRISONER. By Stefan Lorant. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1935. $2.75.*

Reviewed by SAMUEL NOCK

LIKE everyone else in Munich in March, 1933, we Americans had very little idea of what the National Socialists were doing after coming to power; but what little we did know led us time and again to one remark: "You could forgive them almost everything except their stupidity!"

As the months pass on, and the list of National Socialist villainies grows, the tendency to forgive anything at all becomes slight; but still, despite all the crimes and horrors connected with the name of Hitler, the gravest offense remains stupidity. Intellectual stupidity, moral stupidity, practical stupidity, these are the spiritual grace of the National Socialists; and the leaders of the Party apparently sit up nights thinking of ways to make that grace manifest. Stefan Lorant's account of his imprisonment in 1933 gives an account of stupidity that passes comprehension.

Lorant, despite the fact that he was never active in German politics, and was a citizen of Hungary, was thrown into prison, and kept in prison for six months, simply and solely because a member of the National Socialist Party did not like him. No charge was ever made against him in the silly "hearings" to which he was, after long delay, subjected; he had nothing to defend himself against, and could therefore make no defense; he was simply locked up, and that was the end of it—until the Hungarian Government finally got him freed.

It was stupid to arrest and imprison a guiltless journalist who was also a foreigner; it was more stupid to let him smuggle his diary out of prison; it was, perhaps, most stupid of all to let Lorant out, at last, to publish an account of what he went through. Yet to the National Socialist genius nothing in the way of stupidity is impossible: Lorant's book stands as an everlasting condemnation of the party in power in Germany.

There are no such brutalities recorded in this book as in the accounts of Seger and Billinger; the violence of the National Socialists is merely hinted at and suggested now and then. One can read what Lorant writes without getting sick, but not without losing respect for humanity. For if unreason can reign in Germany with so absolute a hand, none of us can feel secure in the little wisdom we have gained with the centuries.

Lorant's diary reflects his moods: it records hours of joy and hours of despair; it accuses and scorns; it mocks and laughs. But, whatever the mood, it condemns National Socialism. Those who have been impressed by the superficial propriety of Germany, by the apparent order and quietness, by the devotion of the people to their Leader, should read this account of what went on during 1933. We who were there can testify to the appearance of order and respect; we did not know that the Lorants were imprisoned. But we can understand, when we read "I Was Hitler's Prisoner," that the whole affair was perfectly possible, for we early learned to believe in the infinitude of National Socialist folly.

Two incidents recorded in Lorant's diary deserve special attention, because, trivial as they are, they illustrate as clearly as possible the nature of National Socialism. One is the story of the superintendent of the prison and the pigeon's egg, beginning on page 223; and the other is the story of the greeting that Lorant's son gave him when he met his father in Budapest, which concludes the diary.

The three-year-old youngster, who had been living in Berlin, and had heard nothing else, shouted "Heil Hitler!" at his father: it seemed the proper thing to do. Lorant asked:

> "Haven't you anything else to say to me?"
> "Heil Hitler!" he shouted again.
> "Well, what else? What's next?" I asked. I was thinking of a kiss of greeting.
> "What's next?" And I repeated reflectively. "Next . . .? Then the band plays and they bang the big drum."

*Samuel Nock returned to America last Fall after having lived in Germany through the period of Hitler's purge and the months that saw many thrown into Herr Lorant's plight.*

STEFAN LORANT WITH ELISABETH BERGNER

# Fantasy in Arizona

*THE CIRCUS OF DOCTOR LAO. By Charles G. Finney. New York: The Viking Press. 1935. $2.*

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE author, late Private, First Class, of the Doughboys, must surely have been the strangest enlisted man the United States Army ever fostered, but fortunately the 15th Infantry went to China. I say fortunately, because that was where Mr. Finney got a good many of his ideas for Doctor Lao's extraordinary circus. No one knows how that circus got into the town of Abalone in Arizona, though we do know how its espouser, Mr. Finney, got back to Tucson, where he is still connected with Arizona's second largest newspaper.

Anatole France, James Branch Cabell, Arthur Machen, you should see that circus. "I went to the animals' fair—," but you never saw such an aggregation of mythological birds and beasts as are here gathered together. And the author possesses the peculiar ability of bringing them to life. They became so real to the reader, in fact, as to be quite uncomfortable.

The spectacular illusions of the book are pitched against the lives of simple folk in a dusty, hot Arizona town. If Anstey Guthrie were alive and had known anything about America he would have loved the idea. Except that he would have made it a story with a plot. There is no plot. There are startling episodes. There are superb characters. Dr. Lao himself is a triumph, particularly when he is saying, "Me no savvee bear business." Well, who can savvy the bear business? In Section VIII of his Catalogue at the end of the book, the author lists among its "Contradictions and Obscurities," *I. Was it a bear or a Russian or what?* He thereby defeats his critics. If he knows, he won't tell. But the various comments of the citizens upon

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this particular phenomenon are rich and rare.

Boris Artzybasheff's own interpretations of the text, by way of illustration, are both beautiful as art and just as crazy as this book; which is, for the most part, perfectly lovely. I have never encountered a satyr more real or read a description of a more horrible Witches' Sabbath. I object to the Sea Serpent, in his colloquy with Etaoin the proof-reader, lapsing from decent English into the highly colloquial. I object to so many goddams, etc., in the book. They spoil the taste of the best ones. But The Hound of the Hedges is a fabulous animal entirely new to me, and an acquaintance I treasure.

I don't wonder the publishers accepted this book by acclamation. It may not mean anything, but it is a remarkable excursion into the fantastic. The Catalogue at the end is not altogether clever, but one is glad to learn that the name of the dead man Apollonius of Tyana brought back to life was Arnold R. Todhunter, and that he said Heaven reminded him more than

DR. LAO AND APOLLONIUS
*Drawing by Artzybasheff from "The Circus of Dr. Lao."*

anything else of an advertisement he had once read of Southern California.

Don't run away with the idea that Mr. Finney's extraordinary brainstorm won't occasionally horrify or disgust you. It will. It isn't a book for babes. But it certainly is funny.

Of the Arizona folk I particularly like the family of the railroad traffic officer; Kate, who got into trouble with the Medusa, and Luther, her husband, who later said, "That ain't no statue, that's Kate."

I liked the side-shows best in the Circus.

# Pilgrimages

BY LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

AGE, I find, fosters the finer feelings; and as mine have grown with the years more romantic, and, if you like ( I don't dislike it myself) more sentimental, I have fallen into the way of making sentimental journeys every now and then to the homes of one or another of the authors whose books I like to read. Like the old pilgrims, I feel that I acquire a kind of merit by walking on the soil which their feet have trod. The sight of the places where they lived moves me almost as much as reading their biographies or writings—moves me at least in a different fashion. A finer air seems to envelop the homes of these fine writers; there is a deeper coloring in the sky above them. I gaze on their roofs and chimneys and the trees about them with a kind of double vision;—they stand there in the light of today, but I see them imaged also in memory and imagination, as they float reflected on the still waters of the past. "Strange," as another sentimental pilgrim, Henry James has expressed it, "strange and special the effect of the empty places we stand and wander in today for the sake of these vanished people; the irresistible reconstruction, to the all but baffled vision, of inevitable presences—the conscious, shining, mocking void, sad somehow with excess of serenity." Something of the effect he describes I have experienced at the Golden Grove in Wales, in which Jeremy Taylor preached his golden sermons; in the rectory garden at Bemerton, where George Herbert butterfly-netted his butterfly conceits, and in the near-by soil of Sidney's Arcadia, out of which, like a blue flower, the word *romantic* grew. And then again in Italy, in the shadow of the white castle of Lerici, from which little port Shelley sailed on his last blue voyage, and also in the hill town of Recanati near Loreto, where one day, from the windows of the Leopardi palace, I looked on that view of sea and mountains which I had so often seen before in the desolation and perfection of Leopardi's verse.

Of all the shores visited by literary pilgrims none is more rich in memorable shrines than the northern shore of the Lake of Geneva. Here is Coppet, where Madame de Staël talked for ever, and where her mother, Madame Necker, still sits, it is said, in mummied state. Then there is Voltaire's Ferney, and further east the home at Lausanne of Gibbon, that other "lord of irony," as Byron called him. But as we approach the further end of fair Leman, in the company of Childe Harold, and the mountains rise to more romantic heights, and the outrageously romantic Castle of Chillon floats before us, the climate changes; from the light ironic air of the eighteenth century we move into the richer chiaroscuro, the dark or

THE CASTLE OF CHILLON
*"Of all the shores visited by literary pilgrims none is more rich . . ."*

rainbow-tinted mists of the other hemisphere of that age of two faces. Hither, to this lakeside, as to the holiest strand in Europe, pilgrims full of soul were drawn in thousands to visit the scenes of that once sacred volume, "Julie, ou la Nouvelle Héloïse." Here were the slopes of Clarens, where Julie and Saint-Preux and Lord Edward Bomston sighed and sorrowed, or passed those long *matinées à l'anglaise* of sensibility and silence. And here was the sacred grove of Julie's *bosquet,* the scene of the tenderest and most famous kiss in literature, and in full view across the lake were the rocks of Meillerie, whence Saint-Preux gazed through his telescope at that lost Paradise, and here also could be visited the Castle of Chillon of which Byron later sang, and from which Julie made her mortal and memorable splash. The glow of love, Byron tells us, once filled the skies above this region, "of love in its most splendid and sublime capacity, and of our participation in its good and glory." No wonder that Shelley, when he visited Lausanne with Byron, scorned to pluck a reliquary sprig of Gibbon's acacia, for fear of outraging the greater and more sacred name of Rousseau.

Even from the unsentimental Stendhal we can learn how deep and tender were the feelings of those who drew near these scenes, drunk as they were from their reading of the "Nouvelle Héloïse." As on his first journey to Italy he approached them, suddenly, he tells us, the sound of church bells, descending from the mountain mingled with his thoughts of Clarens and gave him a moment of divine felicity which was of itself enough, he said, to render life worth living, and which, he wrote long after, was the nearest ap-

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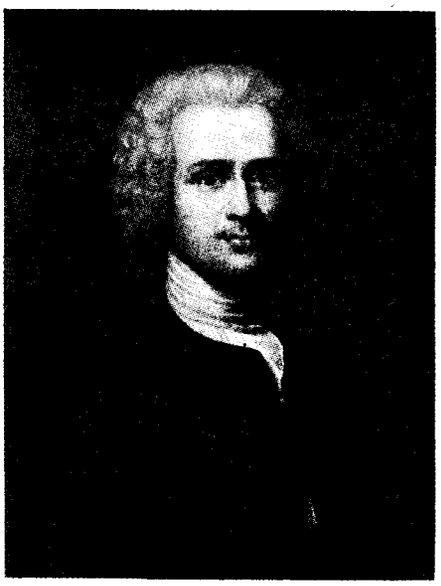


JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU
*From the painting by Latour.*

proach to perfect happiness, to *le bonheur parfait,* that he had ever known.

Hazlitt tells us too that the happiest years of his life were those he spent in reading and rereading "Julie"; nor could he ever forget that divine moment, when sitting "on a sunny bank in a field in which the green blades of corn waved in the fitful morning breeze," his tears mingled with the drops of morning dew he found on those loved pages, and he became, as never before, conscious of what he described in Shakespeare's phrase as his "glassy essence."

Alas! we might sit in a field forever with "Julie" open before us, but we could not read it; nor, as we motor along the side of Lake Leman (round whose shores Byron made a pilgrim's voyage with Shelley, and Rousseau said his heart would never cease to wander) can we, by any effort of the historical imagination, recover those faded ecstasies and out-of-date emotions. The invocation of Childe Harold,

> Clarens, sweet Clarens, the birthplace of deep Love!

can awaken no echo—or at most an ironic echo—in our modern bosoms. Our insensibility is almost equal to what Gibbon described as the "holy apathy" of St. Bernard, who walked all day by the lakeside and never saw the lake. (Whether it was the picture-postcard obviousness and glaring color of that landscape which made the saint avert his eyes, contemporary manuscripts do not say.)

But let the sentimental pilgrim not lose heart; there are "sweet especial places" among these mountains where it is still possible to experience suitable emotions. Let him drive across the frontier of Switzerland into France, and there, by the shores of a more modest lake a happier provision of proper feelings may be his. Such at least was my experience, when, one propitious day in April, I visited the spot at Annecy where Rousseau met Madame de Warens, and that young vagabond of genius first gazed into the tender eyes of this enchanting lady, and listened to the music of her voice—the spot which he wanted to be surrounded by a balustrade of gold, and which should be approached, he said, by pilgrims only on their knees. Although I did not proceed through the streets of Annecy in this fashion, yet, when I saw the gilded balustrade which has actually been put there, I blessed with a gush of genuine feeling my pious predecessors who had in this pretty fashion carried out his wish.

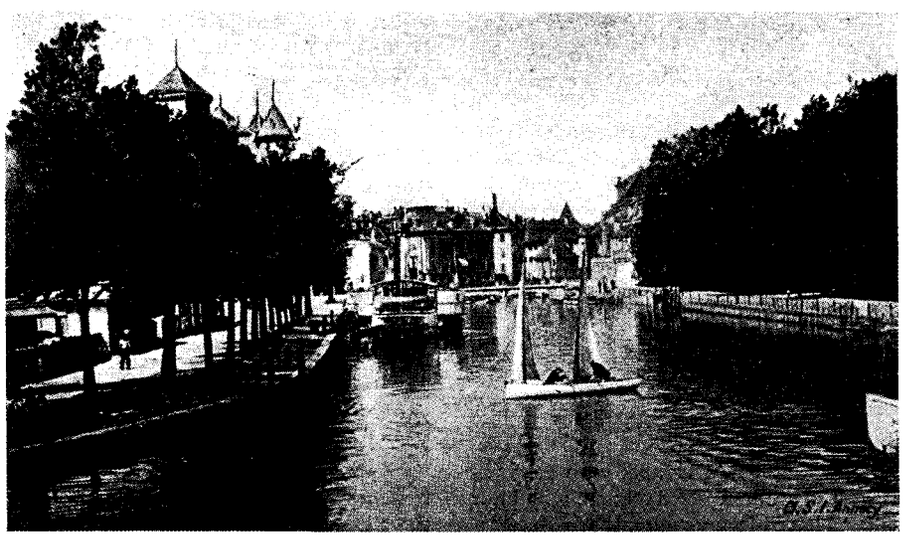
In all Rousseau's many didactic, polemical, mad, and quite unreadable writings there shine out a few pages of pure gold. The earlier chapters of the "Confessions," the Fifth Promenade, and the letters to Malherbes are written by this master of impassioned recollection in a style so musical, so magical and moving, that the experiences he recounts become our own; we are transported, as Ruskin said he was transported, into his ailing body and as we read, his soul is ours. And to visit Les Charmettes in its lovely little vale, hid in the mountains above Chambéry, is to enrich one's mood with a wealth of fine feelings on which I find it hard to set too high a value. We cannot but believe that this pair of ideal lovers are still living there, and only absent for the day; and the *pervenche,* the blue periwinkle which Rousseau remembered after more than thirty years, still blooms for us shyly in the hedge.

Jean-Jacques was of course a little scoundrel and Madame de Warens a spy and swindler; and to all that he tells us of his relations with this enchanting wanton, this mother and mistress friend of his (too much he tells for some nice-minded readers) literary research has coldbloodedly added details of an even more disconcerting nature, exposing a side to this affair so seamy that it deserves to rank beyond that love affair with Sarah Walker the story of which Hazlitt admitted, was somewhat "discordant to honest ears."

But there is no such blur upon the pictures framed and glazed and hung up in my memory of two other places I have visited in France. Both of these were experiences also of an almost uncanny evocation. When I motored out from Bordeaux to the chateau of Montaigne, and climbed in his tower which stands apart up into his circular library, I almost felt myself in the actual presence of the essayist, almost seemed to see him pacing up and down, or pausing now and then to make a note of some conceit or humor, or to gaze with ironic eyes through the window at the home of his wife and family just across the courtyard, and yet—in thought—so many immeasurable miles away.

Montaigne was a familiar, affable ghost to call on, but when I went to see Madame de Sevigné in her Breton home, though the visit was one of the most enchanting visits I have ever paid, yet it was, to tell the truth, a little frightening also. Her chateau of Les Rochers, which stands about four miles from Vitry, and no great distance from Mont St. Michel, remains, with its woodland walks and formal gardens, with her room and writing-table and bright yellow bedspread embroidered by her daughter, so precisely as it was when she lived there, that I felt for a queer moment of hallucination more of a ghost than the ghost I had come to visit—a revenant out of a rowdy present into the more stately epoch which has somehow been exempted from flighty time by the pen of this unassuming, courteous, good-humored great lady, who happens to be the best of all letter writers, and indeed—so I think of her now after another reading of her correspondence—the finest writer of all the women of the world.

*Logan Pearsall Smith, though American-born, is a resident of England. He is the author, among other works, of "Trivia" and "More Trivia."*



ANNECY—WHERE ROUSSEAU MET MADAME DE WARENS
*"Jean-Jacques was of course a little scoundrel . . ."*

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# The BOWLING GREEN by Christopher Morley

PETER GREIG the vagabond vintner, on a gustation trip in France, sends a picture card of La Source Perrier, near Nimes. "This," he writes, "is where Perrier comes from. The Romans used to take the waters here. The gas is still bubbling up. Having a wonderful trip and the food is almost all good. Ford Madox Ford in *Provence* overrates the *loup* (a troutlike fish) greatly; it is not a patch on Pyrenean trout nor has it as good flavor as *rouget.*"

We've always wanted to visit Nimes, and wondered whether it has a memorial to its famous citizen Jean Nicot, who introduced tobacco into France and gave us the word *nicotine.*

A pleasant surprise lately was to learn from Major F. Forbes-Leith, cellar master of the Waldorf-Astoria, that that famous rendezvous still actually has some 1911 Clos de Vougeot; which we had supposed to have all vanished down the red lane before now. We were so pleased by the little map on the label of the bottle that we got the waiter to soak it off for us and here it is. It shows in profile that particular section of the Côte d'Or that is known as the Côte de Nuits.

The Waldorf's stock of mature Burgundies, Major Forbes-Leith told us, were acquired from the cellar of the Hotel de Paris in Monte Carlo. We in turn wanted to tell him, but were too diffident, that there was once a poet who wrote a salute to Clos de Vougeot 1911. Thus:—

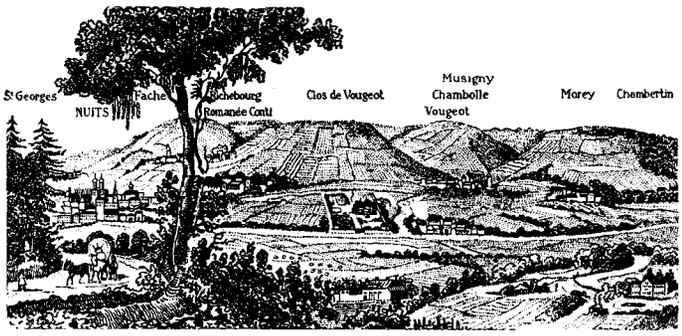
*Clad in full velvet, enters Clos Vougeot,*
*Of lineage that none but he forgets,*
*And with the grace that none but he can show*
*Salutes you with a bunch of violets.*

We are a diligent student of detail in these matters, and we note that this label, charming as it is, shows one error. It was printed for an English importer (B. M. & J. Strauss, Ltd., of London and Meursault) who has allowed a slip which an expert Burgundian will recognize. The vineyard marked (just under the tree) as *Fache* should really be *Tache.* Whether it should be *Tache* which means Stain or *Tâche* which means *Task* we have never been quite certain; you see the wine *Tache Romanée* printed both ways on French menus. We have always preferred to take it without the circumflex, meaning the Romany Stain, and once christened a book in its honor.

In any case it isn't *Fache.*

This particular Vougeot, fine as it was, did not seem quite as velvety violet as the 1911 we remember drinking at Missery. Perhaps it had done a little too much travelling; or, more likely still, its participants were not in training for it. They had not known it was coming and had taken strong cocktails beforehand. As the renowned Berry once cried in anguish, nursing in his arms a bottle of rare Moselle as a taxi leaped along a newly excavated New York highway, "What a way to treat a wine."

There are literary analogies too for the matter of blunting the delicacy of a vintage




LABEL FROM A CLOS DE VOUGEOT

by previous years of cocktails and raw spirit.

Even at its noblest, though, Clos de Vougeot never quite gave this particular amateur the supreme ecstasy of Musigny 1911. Of which the same poet said:—

*Musigny is the Muses' chosen bowl,*
*Pure element of Plato in potation:*
*Sets body into dialogue with soul*
*And rubricates their secret conversation.*

SUGGESTED OUTSIDE READING: *Nouveau Manuel de l'Amateur de Bourgogne,* by Maurice des Ombiaux. Paris: L. Rouart et J. Watelin, editeurs, 6, Place Saint-Sulpice. That is the delightful book that suggests the reason why the Popes lingered so long at Avignon was because in Italy there was no wine of the Côte d'Or.

All this reminds me that I promised to lend my copy of Saintsbury's *Notes on a Cellar Book* to Major Forbes-Leith; which certainly should be in the hands of all cellar masters.

But we are never just a sentimentalist about things because they are far away. There are Burgundies of our own. Among the anxieties caused by the recent disastrous floods in upState New York was the thought of those lovely vineyard regions around Lake Keuka. Only a few days before the flood we drove through Hammondsport. In a noonday pause of strong slumbering sunshine we stopped at two of the wineries in the hope of buying a few bottles of the native wine to take home with us. Apparently the vintners had taken over the good Burgundian habit of a meridian siesta, for all was closed. A passer-by said "You'll have to wait till they've finished lunch." Through the window of the Freidell Winery in Hammondsport we looked in covetously at generous storage of bottles and casks. In the warm quiet of that village street certainly we had no premonition of the catastrophe to come. We fear it may have been those same casks that the newspapers say were swept through the town by the torrent.

We believe in encouraging native industries. If the Hammondsport wineries will let us know how they emerged from the trouble, and what the prospects are for this year's vintage, we'll try to pass on the good word.

Our private thought, in getting that Côte d'Or label from the Clos de Vougeot bottle, was to remark how much it looked like the country round Hammondsport. When we emerged from the Waldorf that evening the papers were on the street with news of the upState flood.

Smart Long Island resorters (said a recent sociological note in the *World-Telegram*) "are anticipating the novel party which Mrs. ————, a hostess famed for her originality, will give tomorrow at her home . . . a cocktail party to open the new Maze which has been constructed in the spacious gardens of the estate . . . modeled after the historic Maze at Hampton Court in England, the Maze has a way through known only to the hostess, and the numerous pathways and turnings doubtless will tax the ingenuity of the guests."

After a few cocktails, even so simple a labyrinth as that of Hampton Court might well be puzzling to Theseus of Southampton, L. I. The Green likes its clients to show up well in all contests of ingenuity, so here is a plan of the old Hampton Court Maze. (Like most American readers, our own first news of it was in that old book which our boyhood thought so entertaining, *Three Men in a Boat.*) We reprint it (see next page) from page 186 of that book we have often commended, *Mathematical Recreations and Essays* by W. W. Rouse Ball (Macmillan). The hostess in Southampton ought to buy a copy; she'll find a lot about mazes and labyrinths, which are known to mathematicians as "unicursal problems." The

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THE MAZE AT HAMPTON COURT

Hampton Court maze was designed in 1690 for William III. "It is an indifferent construction," says Mr. Rouse Ball, "for it can be described completely by always following the hedge on one side."

If you want a maze that will really give serious trouble you should see the plan of the one Mr. Rouse Ball made in his own garden in Cambridge, England. "The nodes," he says cheerfully, "are of a high order." By nodes he means the possibilities of going wrong.

We have been mentioning that book (Mathematical Recreations, etc.) ever since the 10th edition came out in 1922. We have yet to hear from anyone who ever bought it. But the Bowling Green is inexorable; grass grows continually under its feet, but some day the destined reader will make himself known.

"We wake up in the early morning," writes D. W., "because the veery calls us with the loveliest chime in all the world. There are birches and pines about our door, a temperamental blue lake down the hill, and a great bluff of a mountain, called Sunrise, hanging over us. . . . We were reading in [a book] of swimming at night and thought you might like a poem I wrote several years ago."

We do, and hope she won't mind our printing it.

SWIMMING AT NIGHT

We were swimming late one night.
The waters were black velvet, and the sky
Black, sequined with its distant stars.
I was silver in the darkness—you were gold
And warm. I lightly touched your breast—clasped your hand,
As we slipped into the black waters—cool and kind.
There was no depth nor distance—we were unafraid—
We were rhythm—tireless and beautiful—silver and gold—
And the dark stream held us tenderly.

I wish it might be like that at the end—
The clasp of your hand—the slipping away into the black stream,
Glad and unafraid in the darkness.

D. W.

JOIE DE LIVRE, OR RISUS SARDONICUS

SIR:—The BOWLING GREEN always gives me *joie de livre* (as well as *vivre*).

To each of us his books. There are only two kinds of books—those we like, and those we don't.

We all read outoftheway books which our friends don't read.

This is a comforting thought when we enter a bookshop, or library, and groan that here are thousands of books we ought to read, but never will, though we outread Lord Acton himself.

Jim says, "Of course, Bill, you have read Pipparello's new novel, *The Flustered Fantoccini;* William Dirkwood Thimbell's *Meditations in a Bathysphere;* Fritz zu Wachwoch's *Blau, Blau, Blau;* Achille Mozain's thin volume of verse, *Mes Vingt Grands Escargots;* Kaj Squimborg's *History of the Midget Vikings;* Jacob Utterbury's *Blind Alleys of Philada;* Panurge Smith's *Thirteen Bumblebees in a Lunchbox;* and—"

"No, Jim," you crisply return, "but have you read Dr. Otto Von Zauberer's *Risus Sardonicus d'un Redacteur;* the entire eighteenth volume of the *Bicyclopædia* Asiatica; Genevieve Asphodel's *Seventy-Seven Sorts of Sin in Samothrace;* and . . ." (naming nineteen other books which you have read, and Jim has not).

Poor Jim is speechless. Snapping open his snuffbox, he takes a tremendous pinch of rappee (or maybe it is maccaboy) and rushes out to call a taxi.

*Me ne congratulo di cuore. Umilissimo servo,*

V. V. M. B.

New York City.

The Green was delighted to hear from Miss Dorothy Kahn, whom we used to know when she worked on a newspaper in Atlantic City. She is now on *The Palestine Post* in Jerusalem ("Only English Daily Newspaper in Palestine, Trans-Jordan & Syria" says its letterhead) and gives us an interesting flash from the world's most famous city:—

"Should you be contemplating a trip anywhere, try to visit Palestine en route. Two years ago I came here a half-baked Zionist, and was simply swallowed up by the place. It is the most thrilling exciting adventure you can imagine. While of course it is microscopic compared to the Russian experiment, and its aims limited, there is here all the vigor of a tremendous renaissance of culture, the Hebrew language, music, theatre, etc. You might find here a spark of something quite new despite the many mistakes we are making."

## One Frightened Novelist

(*Continued from page 4*)

the other hand there are bits of it which express almost what he intended to say, and send a glow of exultation through him whenever he remembers them (say two paragraphs of about three hundred words each, in a novel of ninety thousand words). That no one but himself ought to be allowed to read it because no one else can see it as it was meant to be, not as it is. That everyone ought to be made to read it because of Chapter Two. That he wishes he could rewrite Chapter Two, because it throws the rest out of proportion. That he wishes he had not finished it, because to be bereaved of work on it is like losing a close friend. That he hopes never to be reminded, by further sight or hearing of it, that he has failed again in the artist's job of recording only what he sees to be true, and has fallen into the shame of writing what he would merely like to be true, and nothing else matters but this. (Incidentally nothing *does* matter but this: I believe that whether he expresses it to himself in this way or not, all writers who aren't hacks subscribe to the same belief: that there is nothing intrinsically right or wrong but this, which is wrong: to let one's artistic judgment be swayed by one's personal wishes. A writer's duty is to be an unbiased umpire watching the game of life, and whatever the mysterious sin against the Holy Ghost may be for other people, for him it is to suggest in his work that anything he has observed, love or death or ambition or sorrow, is nobler or sillier or more enduring or less important than he really believes it to be.)

The "born author" worries miserably about his work, the craftsman worries a bit, and the hack does not worry at all. In the circumstances the astonishing thing is not that there are a good many unscrupulous writers who deliberately write down to the lowest public, but that on the whole there are so few who produce shoddy stuff merely because they cannot be bothered to do better. This is all the more surprising when one realizes that far greater profits may be expected from a book called, say, "My Blood, My Milk, and My Tears," with every page oozing some of this stimulating mixture, than from perhaps a dozen painstaking

# Over the Counter

The Saturday Review's Guide to Current Attractions

| *Trade Mark* | *Label* | *Contents* | *Flavor* |
|---|---|---|---|
| THE HOUSE OF TRUJILLO<br>*Anne Cameron*<br>(Appleton-Century: $2.) | Romantic Adventure | American money-baron and daughter duck gov't financial snoopers with South American tour—run into things. | Good |
| BEDROOM EYES<br>*Maurice Dekobra*<br>(Macaulay: $2.) | Farce | French marquis, his mistress and American wife, all at cross purposes. | Timekiller |

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but utterly uninspired studies of adolescent love in a small town, dull as the life described. Yet literally hundreds of the latter are written every year, including the dozens that eventually find their way into publication, by people badly in need of the money to be made by following the prescription as above. They may have no hope of getting anywhere in their present line, but their artistic conscience functions better than their creative urge, and they will not offend it. Authors, particularly socially, are not an attractive lot: they are apt to be assertive, or self-conscious, or unpleasing to the eye, but taken as a whole from the moral point of view they are—whether they are craftsmen or born authors—extremely respectable, to use "moral" and "respectable" in their important sense for once.

Really that is one of the most interesting things about the writing trade, the conscientiousness which shows through nine out of ten books even when, as books, they are poor things. The unforgivable thing for any fiction writer to do is, as suggested before, to betray his own observation of life, in order to please the vast public who are not concerned with probabilities but enjoy reading by "the light that never was on land or sea"—a bad light either to write or read by: but one has to accept the fact that most readers want from a book a means of escape from reality. And yet at the price of being rather boring, which most books are to that public which can reward so lavishly when given its escape, authors keep pretty constantly before them the unfortunate fact that truth has got to be stranger than fiction, otherwise it is unsatisfactory fiction. When, as frequently happens, they fall into romantic and too-highly colored error it is, quite obviously, a genuine mistake in most cases.

Perhaps it is because the author, for the sake of his work, has to spend so much time looking into his own mind that he dares not risk finding there deliberate intellectual dishonesty, the most depressing of all self-discoveries. This may account for his surprising goodness in just that one respect, or it may be the natural stiffness of moral fibre demanded by a trade that can be followed at irregular hours and has no fixed rules, so that there is nothing to stop him knocking off for the day at any moment, and relegating everything to a tomorrow that never comes.

The unpleasant conclusion from the last paragraph is that a writer really does depend on our two old friends, time for introspection, and persistence in using it, in order to get his work done. Horrible thought, perhaps the public is right, and that is what a book really is, the product of leisure and character.

*E. Arnot Robertson is an English novelist whose "Four Frightened People" and "Ordinary Families" were popular here and in England. The foregoing article will appear in an anthology entitled "What Is a Book?" to be issued by Houghton Mifflin in the Fall.*

# What's in a Title?

By Irvin Heyne

## In the Brave Days of Old

ONE of the chief signs of the Elizabethan period was the exuberance and enthusiasm of its authors. Living in a dramatic age, they dramatized themselves and their works. This gusto showed itself in their choice of titles. For them the prim and colorless titles of previous periods, such as THE PEARL, THE CANTERBURY TALES, THE ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE, were anathema. Many of their proverbs were derived from slang, proverbs, and colloquiliasms.

EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR and EVERY MAN OUT OF HIS HUMOUR took their titles from the quaint theory that man was composed of four elements or humours—air, fire, water, and earth—and that if the balanced proportions of these elements were disturbed, a change was apparent in the man's character. Lest we laugh at the naiveté of our ancestors, let us note that we still say of certain persons that they are fiery, vaporish, clods, full of hot air, or all wet. TALE OF A TUB, a play by Jonson and later the title of a satire by Swift, comes from a slang phrase meaning any improbable story.

Other arresting titles of this period are: A TRICK TO CATCH THE OLD ONE, ANYTHING FOR A QUIET LIFE, A CHASTE MAID IN CHEAPSIDE (the corresponding modern title would be HEN'S TEETH OR FROG'S FEATHERS), A WOMAN KILLED WITH KINDNESS.

THE OLD WIVES' TALE, by George Peele (later used by Arnold Bennett) might be considered the first title derived from the Bible (*1 Timothy 4:7*) were it not that the expression was a colloquial phrase taken by the Bible from common speech.

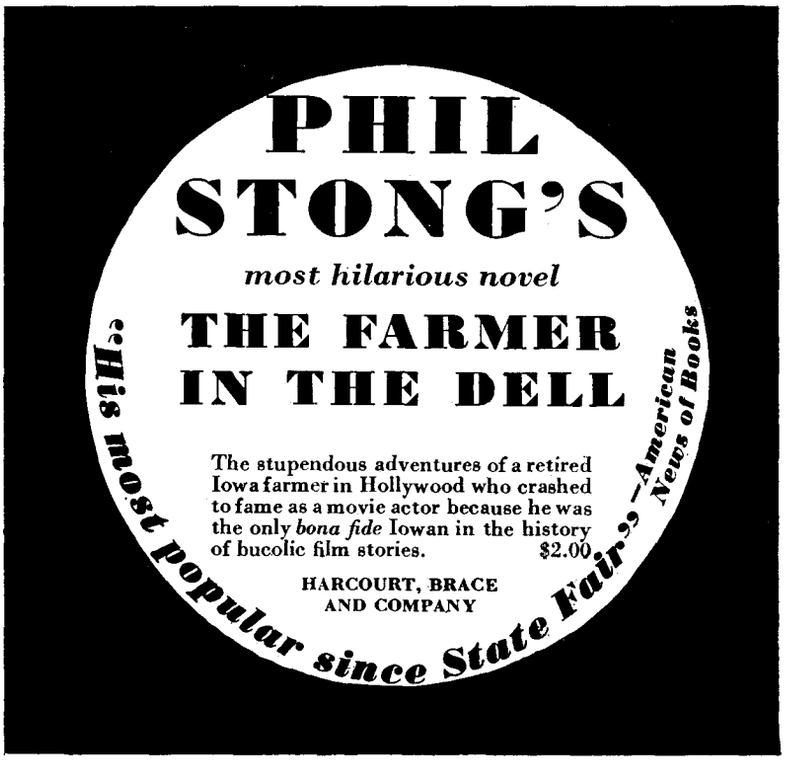
The "Joseph" in Fielding's JOSEPH ANDREWS undoubtedly came from *Genesis 39*. But Fielding was not the only one of his time to apply this name to any pathologically chaste young man. Sheridan named the hypocritical character in THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL Joseph, and even makes him say in the course of the play: "Though I hold a man of intrigue to be a low fellow, it does not follow that I am an absolute Joseph either."

The first conscious user of quotation for book title was the little-known William Gifford, in the eighteenth century. Trying to satirize the numberless vapid and trashy poets of his day, he wrote two satires, THE BAVIAD and THE MAEVIAD. These titles were derived from Bavius and Maevius, the names of two Roman poets, popularly considered by their contemporaries as writers of the "unpleasant'st words that ever blotted paper." Mercifully their works have been lost, and their very names would have been forgotten had not Virgil written:

> Let him who does not hate Bavius love your songs, Maevius,
> And let the same man hitch foxes to the plow and milk billy-goats.

The vogue of quoted titles might be considered as beginning with Thackeray with VANITY FAIR (*Pilgrim's Progress*) and Dickens with THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH (*Il Penseroso*). Other early quoted titles are: THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE NEVER DID RUN SMOOTH, by Charles Reade (*Midsummer Night's Dream*); MUNERA PULVERIS, by Ruskin (*Horace, Odes I, 28:1-4*); AES TRIPLEX, by Stevenson (*Horace, Odes III, 1:4*); BELLES AND POMEGRANATES, by *Browning* (*Exodus 28*); SWEETNESS AND LIGHT, by Arnold (*Swift, Battle of the Books*).

*(To be continued)*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## Letters to the Editor

(Continued from page 9)

Time and the River," has the material for a true American saga.

Christopher Morley, I am indebted to you for recommending "National Velvet." I shall always remember the antics of Donald and the interest of the Browns in horses. "City Editor" and "While Rome Burns," books written by newspaper men, gave me both much needed information and relaxation. Clifford Odets's three plays, "Awake and Sing," "Waiting for Lefty," and "Till the Day I Die," reveal the new voice in the dramatic field. Now I'm being thoroughly fascinated by "An Anthology of World Prose," by Carl Van Doren.

The first group of letters from the everyday reader were most interesting.

CHARLES J. MORAVEC.

Reading, Pa.

### Doesn't Like Bolsheviks

SIR:—You want to know what books your readers read? Well. You've asked for it. I read nothing but mystery stories as a rule. That is, since 1929. I am not trying to escape from life so much as I am trying to escape from modern literature. And I always did like a good murder story full of gore and fun. But I find that the mystery writers do a better job of it than our novelists and poets. When I have exhausted all the mystery books on the market, I go to the movies. Anything is better than having to read the stuff you usually find in bookstores. . . . I know of a bookstore where I asked its owner for a good mystery story and he said he did not know much about mystery stories but was I interested in Social Credit? He had several pamphlets on it, etc., etc. I asked for a book and they gave me Social Credit. This could be used as a motto symbolical of the Reader and modern literature.

Outside of Dorothy L. Sayers and her ilk, and what a magnificent ilk it is, I have read:

"National Velvet"—it gets the blue ribbon from me both for form, originality, and guts.

"Paths of Glory"—thrilling narrative and extreme originality. But all this talk about liking it because it will help to stop war is sentimental slush and an insult to the author. It could be just as good a book if it sent millions into war. I don't like to give any reasons why I like a book. The real reason is I like it and that's all. But reasons I fish about for, make my liking seem more important, but it is not really.

"Young Renny"—I was disappointed in it.

"Follow the Furies"—I liked the psychology but the religion could have been left out.

"So Red the Rose"—because the Southerners really were that without *Ah's* and *you-alls*. It ought to have had the Pulitzer Prize.

"Now in November"—nice but tremendously overrated. It seems to me the soil has been plowed enough. Prose poetic but unoriginally so, Poetry Society prose I call it.

"Memory of Love"—brilliant study of a cad. I could not put it down until I had finished it. When I say a cad, I mean the way most people fall in love nowadays.

One page of "Of Time and the River." A literary background to my mind is absolutely essential for one to be a writer in these days. When the English language was fresh and unplucked, you could afford not to have a background. But now something must make up for that lost freshness in our speech and writings, and a literary background is the answer. By that I don't mean you must do away with all quotation marks . . . nor do I mean you must swallow English Literature whole like Mr. Thomas Wolfe. I am sure that if you cut him open you would find whole slabs inside him of English literature. If Dr. Johnson was a leviathan of English literature, then Mr. Wolfe must be a boa-constrictor.

Mr. Fearing's poems—I read three lines in a book review. No wonder Mr. Fearing had to publish his own poems. It is a wonder that the printing press did not object and break down.

"Panic"—a poetic drama. It did not panic me.

"Chorus for Survival"—Wanting to survive myself and not die of boredom, I looked at five lines of it and put it back on the shelf.

I have skimmed through various of the so-called proletarian novels. They are boring, but what is even worse, they are cowardly and whining. Vulgar and loudmouthed. Whenever I read a copy of the *New Masses* it makes me think of a bedbug trying to be literary.

"Pylon"—Magnificently done but I would never read it over again (I've read all of Dickens through at least six times).

DOROTHY HOMANS.

New York City.

### Books Like Mellen's Food

SIR:—May I voice my enthusiasm for five books which I have quite recently read?

1. "National Velvet," which I have just today finished reading and in which I have not been disappointed (I bought it on Mr. Morley's say-so in your magazine).

2. "Young Renny," and it's as good as "Jalna" and better than any of the sequels.

3. "Satan Was a Man" by Bierstadt. I don't think your reviewer did this blood-chilling little book justice; I think it's one of the finest of its genre.

4. "The Eligible Bachelor," not quite so good as "Four in Family," but nevertheless most entertaining.

5. And this not so recent novel: "Emma," I never can decide whether I like it or "Pride and Prejudice" better.

I do hope your symposium brings to light many novels which we might otherwise have missed. Like Mellen's Food, good books are best advertised by their loving friends.

DOROTHY H. AVERY.

Morganton, N. C.

### Reading for a Gardener

SIR:—There are two kinds of summer reading for a gardener—one, when the planting and weeding are so urgent that only a book like "National Velvet" can keep me away from them—the other, when an interlude of drought or heavy rain gives me time to sit down to peruse some old favorite. This year it is De Morgan's "Alice for Short." I also came across Jeffery Farnol's first book the other day. What a pleasant little romantic thing it is, "The Money Moon"! It should be re-issued for the sentimental seventeens who aren't really so hardboiled as one thinks.

I thoroughly enjoyed "Latter Howe," by Doreen Wallace, if one can say one enjoys a book in which the suspense hinges on the death of a perfect wife in an almost perfect marriage. Miss Wallace has no trace of morbidity in her writing yet she has a fine sensitivity, and sense of humor.

LILIAN A. GREIG.

Portchester, N. Y.

### Avid Reader

SIR:—An avid reader welcomes an opportunity to pass on her impressions, and recommends for general reading "Russia's Iron Age," Chamberlin, a well-considered, objective, comprehensive review and summary of Russia of the past ten years and today. The author knows whereof he speaks! "The Edwardian Era," Maurois, is a keen, penetrating, sympathetic—yet not sentimental—discussion of England and Europe just before the accession of Edward VII and during his reign; delightfully done.

I found "Through Space and Time," Jeans, challenging and stirring to the imagination—as well as good mental fodder—and, more recently, Sir Arthur Eddington's "New Pathways in Science," a bit more technical perhaps, but full of interest. For one who is more interested in our own earth, as being perhaps less remote, R. A. Daly's "Our Mobile Earth" is well written and easily understood.

Of novels I have read fewer of the last-minute issue. I find that a good one loses nothing for waiting a year or so. "So Red the Rose," Young, however, was beautifully done—very true: tragic, yes, but so was the era he portrays. "The Folks," an equally true delineation of modern life as it reacts on the parents and children of a small town. Of lighter vein the "Free Fishers," by John Buchan, is a robust, fast-moving story. Buchan never lets you down by shoddy writing and spins a *good yarn*. Nor does Dorothy Sayers, whom I consider topnotch in her line.

EDITH R. WEST.

Philadelphia, Pa.

**No Traveller Returns**

By

**JOSEPH AUSLANDER**

The new volume of poetry by the author of "Letters To Women", "Sunrise Trumpets", etc. "I admire Mr. Auslander's work very much indeed. His work is head and shoulders above the rank and file of those writing verse in this country. He has preserved both honesty of intention and vigorous independence as a craftsman."—*William Rose Benét.* $2.50

**HARPER & BROTHERS New York**

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# The PHŒNIX NEST

BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THIS is a red-letter day and should be a special issue of the *Nest,* though, to be exact, the red-letter day occurred on June 27th when I received a priceless volume, with a small letter on blue paper from *Dorothie B. Hoover* of Joplin, Missouri. That letter wished me a happy birthday (though I was born at Candlemas!) and greeted the *SRL* and its editors, in the words of the book, with "unbounded respect for everybody." And there—as I live and breathe!—was a paper-bound copy of "Phœnixiana; or, Sketches and Burlesques," by "Yours respectively, *John B. Squibob*" (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1869). The price in those days was fifty cents a copy. The author was *Captain George Horatio Derby* of the United States Army, a West Pointer of the Class of 1846. Derby was born a New Englander, though he gained his reputation as a Western humorist. He was ordered to California in '49 and remained on the Coast until 1856. In 1853, at San Diego, a friend put him temporarily in charge of the local newspaper. Derby proceeded to get out such a paper as has never been seen before or since, and had all California in stitches.

As I staggered down Fifth Avenue on this blistering morning I heard a gentle voice inform me that if I went on not wearing a hat I should probably get a sun-stroke. Looking down from my vast height what was my surprise to discover young *Eleanor Shaler,* the comic songstress and *danseuse,* poising airily on one foot in front of those flower-beds ferninst Rockefeller Centre. The sight of this gentle maiden on such a morn, though I at first confused her with the decorations of the fountain, awoke such a pleasant confusion in my breast that I completely forgot to impart to her the great news that I now possessed a copy of "Phœnixiana."

The pertinency of this too arrant confidence is as follows. Quite a long while ago Miss Shaler asked me how she could procure a copy of John P. Squibob's immortal work, inasmuch as she remembered a song from it that her father used to sing her as a lullaby or something. As our fathers happened at one time to be great friends and stationed together at the same Ordnance Post, doubtless they often conversed concerning the merits of Captain Derby.

I am sure the ditty with such a dying fall, that Eleanor desires for her repertoire, is the masterly "Dirge On the Deth of Jeames Hambrick," occurring upon page 131 of "Phœnixiana," as written by Mr. Orion W. Mudge, Esq. It goes as follows:

*it was on June the tenth*
*our hearts were very sad*
*for it was by an awful accident*
*we lost a fine young lad*

*Jeames Hambrick was his name*
*and alas it was his lot*
*to you I tell the same*
*he was accidently shot*

*on the peacus river side*
*the sun was very hot*
*and its there he fell and died*
*where he was accidently shot*

*on the road his character good*
*without a stain or blot*
*and in our opinions growed*
*until he was accidently shot*

*a few words only he spoke*
*for moments he had not*
*and only then he seemed to choke*
*I was accidently shot*

*we wrapped him in a blanket good*
*for coffin we had not*
*and then we buried him where he stood*
*when he was accidently shot*

*and as we stood around his grave*
*our tears the ground did blot*
*we prayed to god his soul to save*
*he was accidently shot*

The author, Orion W. Mudge, adds:

"This is all, but I writ at the time a epitaff which I think is short and would do to go over his grave:—

EPITAFF
here lies the body of Jeames Hambrick
who was accidently shot
on the bank of the peacus river
by a young man

he was accidently shot with one of the large size colt's revolver with no stopper for the cock to rest on it was one of the old fashion kind brass mounted and of such is the kingdom of heaven
truly yours
ORION W MUDGE ESQ"

May the Phœnician of this column point out that the ballad above quoted displays singularly contemporary characteristics and is quite abreast of modern poetry, in that it entirely discards both initial capitals and punctuation. This was lately thought a perfectly dandy stunt on the part of versifiers, something that gave their stuff just the proper paprika. The practice has somewhat languished of late.

Squibob was once in Benicia, California, but long before I myself honored that rural spot by my presence. He went there in the Fall of 1850, and calls it "the world-renowned seaport." He speaks of "the mighty city whose glimmering lights extended over an area of five acres." He dilates upon the California flea—an animal I well remember. The origin of the name of that storied town where the author of "John Brown's Body" once drove a small gray donkey in a two-wheeled cart (that is, when the donkey would move) the origin of the name of that Venice of the West, as Squibob gives it to us, was as follows:

> "Said Simple to Larkin, 'Why not make a city here, my boy? Have it surveyed into squares, bring up ships, build houses, make it a port of entry, establish depots, sell lots, and knock the centre out of Yerba Buena straight.' Yerba Buena is now San Francisco, reader.) 'Ah!' quoth Larkin with a pleasant grin diffusing itself over his agreeable countenance, 'that would be nice, hey?'" Need we say that the plan was adopted—carried out—proved successful—and Larkin's memorable remark "*be nice, hey,*" being adopted as the name of the growing city gradually became altered and vulgarized into its present form Benicia!

*"She spikes the small beer of living with the pure alcohol of the impossible"*

*writes* CHRISTOPHER MORLEY *in*

**OLD LOOPY**

A LOVE LETTER FOR CHICAGO

Such delightful phrases will spike your enjoyment of Mr. Morley's reminiscences of America's most paradoxical city. A gem for Morley fans and collectors, finely printed at The Fortune Press and illustrated with ten unusual photographs by Guy Ederheimer, Jr., price $1.00.

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# "Nationalistic" Criticism

*THE FIRST CENTURY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE: 1770-1870. By Fred L. Pattee. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company.* 1935. $3.50.

Reviewed by HARRY HAYDEN CLARK

GRANTING the impossibility of writing a history even of one century of American literature which will please everyone, let us tolerantly content ourselves with approaching this interesting book in the light of Mr. Pattee's own aims and simply ask to what extent he has fulfilled them. He is well-known as the most gifted of the "nationalists," of the older historians whose approach to American literature involved a somewhat impressionistic appreciation of our literature in proportion as it is peculiar, unique, and devoted to the distinctive features of the American scene. This present history of "The First Century of American Literature" omits the first century and a half of literature in America, and deals with the period from 1770 to 1870. Following Mr. Pattee's "History of American Literature since 1870" (1915), his best book, and his more journalistic "New American Literature" (1930), the present volume rounds out his interpretation of our national letters with reference to their unique nationalism.

> My fundamental conception [he says in the preface] has been that American literature during its century and a half of existence has been an emanation from American life and American conditions. . . . I have watched for evolutions from peculiarly American conditions: the evolution of American humor, the American essay, the American newspaper, the American newspaper column, the American short story.

The approach tends to minimize European literary and philosophic influences as well as the authors' ideas. It stresses an essentially external and environmental determinism: our literature is regarded as a sort of inevitable emanation from "peculiarly American conditions." Mr. Pattee is as much of an impressionist, indifferent to argumentative cogency, however, as he is a disciple of Taine. His approach is by no means as narrow and intolerant as that of the exclusively economic determinists, and his genial spirit and native catholicity of taste often lead him to enrich his work with discussions beyond his professed aim. His approach produces much more fruitful results in his volume on the period following 1870, when the West was most influential and when the aims of the writers synchronized more closely with his stress as an interpreter.

Yet the present volume contains much that is of interest in showing the history of the notion that American literature should devote itself to the unique features of our local landscape rather than to those aspects of our common humanity which we share with other nations. No one has been so charmingly appreciative of Freneau's romantic qualities as Mr. Pattee, whose earlier monumental work in editing Freneau placed all scholars in his debt. The essay on Brown is good. And perhaps the most interesting chapters in the book are those miscellaneous ones scattered here and there dealing with journalism and journalistic conditions—"The Rise of the Reviewers" (especially Dennie and Brown); "The Periodical Essay"; "The Annuals and Gift-Books"; and "The Magazinists." Scholars, however, will probably prefer to make use of the much more elaborate treatment of these subjects in the monumental "History of American Magazines," by Professor Frank Luther Mott.

Granting that the nationalistic approach is worth while, and that one may read our literature as an index to the history of the American people (Mr. Pattee says he has his eye "always upon the American people"), it would seem necessary to pay respectful attention to what the people wrote and read, regardless of whether or not one personally happens to like it from the belletristic point of view. The first difficulty Mr. Pattee has in carrying out his own aim is that he tends in practice to allow belletristic considerations to lure him away from his goal. He seems at times uncertain whether he is a social historian or a belletristic impressionist. He has a right to begin the study of literature in America a century and a half late, of course, but if he is avowedly using the literature as an index to the history of the people, he is hardly justified in dismissing this record of the people for a century and a half by saying "before 1776 America produced nothing at all." Can one really understand New England writers such as Emerson, Hawthorne, and Longfellow without first understanding the Puritan tradition, as represented by Edwards, which they partly accepted and partly rejected? If one wishes to get at the broad traditions which powerfully conditioned the genesis of our national ideals, would not one learn more from a cogent analysis of the patterns of ideas represented by the conflicting Jefferson and Hamilton than from an appreciation of that hitherto ignored bird-lover, Alexander Wilson? Yet Mr. Pattee appears to think Jefferson and Hamilton unworthy of any serious attention, while the bird-lover gets seven or eight pages.

If the people whose history we are dealing with have minds—ideas, of one sort or another—as well as emotions, the history of their ideas surely ought to be of major importance. But one looks in vain in this book for that ability to get inside of an author's mind and to trace with precision the genetic development and the logical articulation of his pattern of ideas with reference to the contemporary climate of opinion. Ideas, whether political, religious, or esthetic, are usually treated, if at all, in the vaguest sort of way. Witness the essays on Franklin and Paine. In this respect, Mr. Pattee's work is much inferior to that of the late Mr. Parrington. For although the latter was a rather narrow and intolerant partisan devoted to art for Marx's sake, he was acutely incisive in defining ideas and he certainly had a tonic influence in turning the current of American literary scholarship away from the vagaries of subjective impressionism, whether nationalistic or otherwise, toward a clean-cut exposition of the authors' patterns of ideas set in dramatic contrast. One seems obliged, then, reluctantly to conclude that, whatever the value of Mr. Pattee's nationalistic approach to our literature as an index to our history, he has carried out his own aim very inadequately.

The essays on the major figures, considered without reference to a unified point of view, contain many occasional passages of insight and good criticism. On the whole, however, as individual surveys they are almost all below the level of scholarship today, while they contain nothing not already hackneyed.

Let us temper our judgment of this book, however; probably Mr. Pattee has done more than anyone else to popularize American literature in a wholesome and idealistic manner.

*Harry Hayden Clark is associate professor of English at the University of Wisconsin.*

# The Criminal Record

## The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

| *Title and Author* | *Crime, Place, Sleuth* | *Summing Up* | *Verdict* |
|---|---|---|---|
| MURDER IN THE PARK<br>*Cecil Freeman Gregg*<br>(Dial: $2.) | Rich Britisher threatened, retainer killed. Strange Mr. Wm. Williams and Insp. Higgins play ducks and drakes. | Plot a bit involved but "Higgy" is up to usual form and there is a deal of thrilling action. | Par |
| DEATH CATCHES UP WITH MR. KLUCK<br>*"Xantippe"*<br>(Crime Club: $2.) | Sponsor of radio feature cruelly killed, also studio handy-man. Laconic Mr. Butts spots the killer. | Radio stuff is fine and action pops, but yarn goes haywire so often that it doesn't quite click. | Just misses |
| THE CORPSE IN THE COPPICE<br>*R. A. J. Walling*<br>(Morrow: $2.) | Man with mysterious past killed in rural English hideaway. Tolefree and Insp. Pierce quiz numerous arrivals on scene. | Pure deduction type of tale carried to *n*th degree with unfortunate result that it is "faultily faultless." | "Splendidly null" |

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# The New Books

## Biography

*THE EMPEROR CHARLES IV. By Bede Jarrett. Sheed & Ward.* 1935. $3.

To even the most omnivorous of lay readers, to whom Charles I as Charlemagne and Charles V of the Hapsburg clan are old and familiar figures, the fourth of the Charleses who bore the title of Holy Roman Emperor is likely to be an obscure and unknown personality. No biographer has hitherto seen fit to devote to him in English any account other than the briefly encyclopedic, and beyond a few allusions to him in Froissart he is seldom met in the pages of more popular writers. And yet he was not only historically significant, the greatest leader of the fourteenth century in central Europe, but also most evocatively interesting, the far-sighted statesman and organizer, who, in an age not ready for such unfeudal centralization, struggled to create an imperial unity and who actually succeeded in augmenting the power and assuring the continuity of the imperial throne.

As king of Bohemia, a dignity to which he was advanced before his election as Emperor and which he held throughout his life, he first showed his great administrative capacities. There he began to smooth out the inevitable differences between Czech and German; he implanted the early seeds of a genuine nationalism; and by strengthening the position of the church, especially by the introduction of monasteries, he gave a new emphasis to learning. With the Empire, his aims and his methods were much what they were with Bohemia, but here his task was rendered more difficult by the loose and uncontrollable organization of its component parts. His famous Golden Bull did something to soften this evil, but was more beneficial to his successors than to Charles himself. He stood always for the unity and peace of Christendom, and dreamed, how vainly centuries of later history have proven, that with the help of the papacy his ends could be achieved. The late Father Jarrett understood Charles as perhaps only a Dominican could, and has here presented him to English readers with a simplicity and a just eloquence which ought to command the respect of every historian and every lover of great men.

C. D. A.

*PILGRIMS OF THE WILD. By Grey Owl. Scribners.* 1935. $3.50.

A Scotch halfbreed, Ojibway by adoption, but born in New Mexico of an Apache mother, is author of the most notable Canadian book of recent months. "Pilgrims of the Wild" is essentially the inner drama of how a slayer became a preserver. It is the romance of a starving Indian dedicating himself to an ideal apparently against personal advantage, and thereby speedily reaching fame and receiving the support of the Canadian Government.

Grey Owl entered Canada in his early twenties and became hunter, trapper, forest ranger, and guide. During the Great War he served as a sniper with a Montreal regiment. Afterwards, there were hard times due to scarcity of game and responsibilities assumed by marrying the full-blood Iroquois maid, Anahareo. She is described as toting her full load over a portage and then sitting down to powder her nose. Her influence intensified his growing revulsion towards the constant butchery of his trade as trapper. When they rescued two beaver kittens, whose parents had been killed, and the creatures had become pets, Grey Owl vowed never to kill this species again.

Faced with the problem of maintenance, he turned to magazine writing on the topic of his animal wards and woodscraft generally and gained an immediate hearing. One early result was investigation by the Canadian Government, which promptly established Grey Owl in Prince Albert National Park with all facilities for carrying on his chosen work. As a beginner, Grey Owl studied dictionaries and style books with the result that his first book, "The Men of the Last Frontier," was a highly polished document; but in "Pilgrims of the Wild" he has attained ease. The intimate self-story of a unique career, it holds the greater interest for most readers.

W. A. D.

## Fiction

*HEDWIG. By Vance Randolph. Vanguard.* 1935. $2.

Mr. Vance Randolph has long since established his fame as one of the foremost authorities on the hillbillies who inhabit the Ozark Mountains—those highlands which sprawl over the adjoining corners of Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. His familiarity with the region and its people is made significant for his readers by his tolerant humanity, his racy humor, and a marked skill in the literary use of dialect. His four earlier books were collections of stories of the Ozarks, or sociological accounts of the primitive survivals there. But now he offers us a novel.

"Hedwig," however, breaks a new trail, though one admirably suited to the display of Mr. Randolph's peculiar talents as a narrator. The scene is laid, or at any rate centers, in the same region. But the principal character, from which the book takes its name, is not a hillbilly of old American stock, but a girl of German blood, born in Russia, who tells her amusing and pathetic story in the first person and in a most persuasive German-American dialect. She comes as a child with her parents to Kansas, removes to Oklahoma, and afterward to Arkansas. The story ends in Kansas City, Missouri. Her story is the story of a simple, matter-of-fact, and ignorant country girl, whose first lover is killed in an accident, whose various marriages turn out none too well, and who ends up as a prostitute—albeit a benevolent prostitute not without some reserves and compunctions. The story is, in short, the first half of a loose woman's life: it might have been entitled "Up From Decency." Mr. Randolph spares us the latter end of such a career. The decency from which Hedwig graduates is the dying decency of European immigrants, not that of the old American stock. In fact, there is little to show that Hedwig encountered any Americans who exhibited decency. American readers may take comfort in the fact that few of her foreign acquaintances were any better!

There is humor here, some not too insistent social criticism, and some racy portraiture. But the dominant feeling is one of pathos, relentlessly impressed upon us by the girl's helpless realism. Hedwig was easily pleased, but she didn't have a good time. But it is evident that the author had a good time writing the book, and most of his readers will share that satisfaction.

S. V.

*STRANGERS COME HOME. By Ronald Macdonald Douglas. Macmillan.* 1935. $2.50.

These seventeen short stories are the first literary work of a Scot whose spirit is still fighting the border wars, who still hates in his blood the very sight of an Englishman. Mr. Douglas writes skilfully, with forceful economy, of humble people who are bewildered and frustrated by the wiles and stupidities of the world. His active moral indignation gives occasional place to a humor that is sometimes grim, sometimes ironic, and in both moods he is effective Only a half-dozen of the stories fall below Mr. Douglas's own best accomplishment, the fault being usually triteness of theme or a temporary defective sense of form.

"Atkinson" is the best of the seventeen, telling of the tragic inability of a gawky Highland rustic to find himself in army life; "The Sabbath" is equally strong, a memorable study of pointless industrialized lives. In the humor of "Body and Soul" and "The Battle of Killaloo" there is a definitely Celtic pungency. As a whole, the collection has a persuasive vigor; it is good reading.

R. B. M.

## Miscellaneous

*GENTLEFOLK IN THE MAKING. By John E. Mason. The University of Pennsylvania Press.* 1935. $4.

The modern reader of Emily Post or of other similar guides to proper behavior is probably not aware that books fulfilling the same, and often a loftier, purpose have existed, in varying guises, from the earliest times. Usually they were not mere books of etiquette to elaborate systems of polite conduct, but were more basic, searching out the roots of nobility and struggling to ascertain what really constitutes "goodness" in man. Mr. Mason, in this very learned and thorough survey which he has devoted to them, finds it difficult to define exactly their scope and variety, but he adopts the term "courtesy book" and comes as near definition as it is possible to come, by saying that courtesy is "a code of ethics, esthetics, or peculiar information for any class-conscious group, and a courtesy book is a book which sets forth such a code." He then proceeds to trace their history from "The Governour" of Sir Thomas Elyot

(*Continued on page* 22)

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# The Clearing House

CONDUCTED BY AMY LOVEMAN

*Inquiries, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope, should be directed to Miss Loveman, in care of The Saturday Review.*

A BALANCED RATION FOR A WEEK'S READING

CONQUISTADOR. By Archibald MacLeish. *Houghton Mifflin.*

BLACK APRIL. By Julia Peterkin. *Bobbs-Merrill.*

THE LETTERS OF WILLIAM JAMES. *Little, Brown.*

## Michigan Celebrities

*"Is there a book," asks* G. O. A. of Lansing, Mich., *"that contains sketches of the lives of noted authors and artists that were born in Michigan? . . . Do you know of a book dealing with the origin of signs and customs? . . . And will you send me the names of a few reliable books on Japan?"*

HER own home state will furnish G. O. A. with the fullest material on its native sons who are artists, for the Michigan State Library issues a volume entitled BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF AMERICAN ARTISTS, which in addition to its own accounts contains a bibliography that should be most useful. As for the writers of Michigan, if it is a mere outline of the facts of a career of which G. O. A. is in search, she will find that in that first resort of all who wish to know anything of the lives of contemporary notabilities, WHO'S WHO IN AMERICA (Marquis). This indispensable reference book lists its entries alphabetically, but it contains in the front of the volume a grouping by states from which it should be possible without difficulty to extract the writers of reputation, so as to look them up in the later section. LIVING AUTHORS and AUTHORS TODAY AND YESTERDAY (Wilson) will furnish fuller accounts, possibly pictures, and frequently anecdotes.

As to the volume dealing with the origin of signs and customs, one of the most fascinating books I know concerns itself with that very subject. Unfortunately Brand's OBSERVATIONS ON POPULAR ANTIQUITIES (London: Chatto & Windus) is, I think, out of print, though easily available in libraries and probably through second-hand stores. "It chiefly illustrates," to quote from its title-page, "the origin of our vulgar customs, ceremonies, and superstitions," and in it are to be found the most delectable bits of information. There we may find that "mirrors were used by magicians in their diabolical operations, and in ancient times was practised a kind of divination by the looking-glass; whence, it should seem, has been derived the present popular notion, according to which the breaking of a looking-glass is accounted a most unlucky accident"; that the common belief that a tingling of the ears denotes to the absent that they have been the subject of conversation goes back as far at least as Pliny, and that with the Anglo-Saxons the nuptial benediction was "performed under a veil, or square piece of cloth, held at each corner by a tall man over the bridegroom and bride, to conceal her virgin blushes; but, if the bride was a Widow, the veil was esteemed useless." The book is a veritable mine of curious knowledge.

Brand's book, as I said, is out of print, but Brewer's DICTIONARY OF PHRASE AND FABLE (Lippincott), is fortunately to be had (and a grand book it is, too!) as is also his READER'S HANDBOOK (Lippincott), a volume no less excellent. Equipped with these and such a volume as William S. Walsh's HANDY BOOK OF CURIOUS INFORMATION (Lippincott) G. O. A. ought to be able to dig out many a bit of piquant lore.

Now for her third request—a list of books on Japan. Since she is particularly anxious to have the point of view of Americans presented, I think the best books for her purpose are, first of all, Kenneth Scott Latourette's THE DEVELOPMENT OF JAPAN (Macmillan), an excellent survey which begins with Japan when it made contact with the West, and carries the chronicle down to the present, with a discussion of the people, the government and institutions, the foreign relations, and the policy of the country. Nothing could be a better way for G. O. A. to orientate herself than through this volume (and until I had written it I was not conscious of the double meaning, or precise meaning, perhaps, that could attach to the word "orientate" in this connection). Two recent books, not on Japan specifically, but with pages on it of the highest interest, are George E. Sokolsky's THE TINDER BOX OF ASIA (Doubleday, Doran) and Sherwood Eddy's THE CHALLENGE OF THE EAST (Farrar & Rinehart). Both of these works are by observers long familiar with the conditions and problems of which they write, and are impartial, informed, and illuminating.

## Astronomy for the Young

S. D. H. of Durham, N. C., *is anxious to find a book about the planets and constellations, illustrated and simple, suitable for a boy of nine, and "yet true as to its information."*

The very thing for him is W. Maxwell Reed's THE STARS FOR SAM (Harcourt, Brace). Mr. Reed, whose earlier book, THE WORLD FOR SAM (Harcourt, Brace), was a Junior Literary Guild selection, wrote both of them for a small nephew of his own who had an inquiring mind and intelligence enough to justify an exposition which, though not too abstruse for the youthful understanding, was in no way written down to it. They make interesting reading even for older folk, and should open up fascinating worlds to children. Mr. Reed was at one time a member of the astronomy department of Harvard University, sufficient witness to the authoritativeness of his work.

## Interurban Line

L. B., of Buffalo, N. Y., *wants a list of modern books on interurban electric lines and street cars.*

I started on a quest for such volumes and had the same sort of experience that so often befalls the passenger hurrying to catch a surface car—that is, it was disappearing around the corner. For I found a list that divided itself elaborately into volumes on various modes of transportation, and had references to buses and railroads and steamship lines, and way down at the bottom of the page a title: Traffic Regulation in Small Cities (Public Administration Service), by Dwight MacCracken. I turned the page to find further titles, and, alas, there were no others. But this little pamphlet has a bibliography so perhaps it will serve L. B.'s purposes.

## From Readers

Apropos of the discussion of the Thais legends which I printed some time last February, Professor E. Preston Dargan of the University of Chicago writes:

> While the only first-class modern literary version that I know of is the well-known story by Anatole France, there are a good many other renderings of the legend. There is first of all France's own earlier poem called "La Légende de Sainte Thaïs, comédienne" in the Chasseur bibliographe, March 1, 1867. No Paphnutius appears in this poem, where the conversion of Thaïs is uncomplicated by love interest. France used various sources both for story and poem. Among them were the following:
>
> Bollandistes, Les Pères. ACTA SANCTORUM. Vol. IV. Paris and Rome, 1866.
>
> Hrotswitha. THÉÂTRE, translated by Charlees Magnin. Paris: Duprat, 1845.
>
> Migne, J. P. PATROLOGIA LATINA. Vol. 73. Paris: Garnier Frères, 1879.
>
> LES VIES DES PÈRES DES DÉSERTS, edited by Marin. Tome I, 1761.
>
> Voragine, Jacques de. LA LÉGENDE DORÉE, translated by G. Brunet. Vols. I and II. Paris, 1843.
>
> These and still other forms of the story are treated in O. R. Kuehne's work, A STUDY OF THE THAÏS LEGEND WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HROTSWITHA'S PAPHNUTIUS. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1922.

Referring to the inquiry of L. T. C. of Farmington, Conn., in the Clearing House for July 6, Jannette L. Sturges, of Redlands, Calif., writes:

> I would like to call attention to a play, Benjamin Franklin, by Rita Benton, published in a volume entitled, "Franklin and Other Plays," by Rita Benton, The Writers Publishing Co., Inc., New York, in 1924.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 68)

SCOTT—"HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS"

For me I love my study-fire to trim,
And con right vacantly some idle tale. . . .
While antique shapes of knight and giant grim
Damsel and dwarf, in long procession gleam,
And the romancer's tale becomes the reader's dream.

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# Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

WE are shocked to hear of the death of William A. Britton, California representative of a group of Eastern publishers. Billy Britton, for many years a traveler for Doran and then Doubleday Doran, was one of the best loved men in the field; a personality of endearing simplicity and sincerity. He was a son of the late Sumner Britton, of the Chicago firm Reilly & Britton. He gave us the fright of a lifetime by driving us up Mt. Wilson, California, in his big Buick. His affectionate and steadfast nature will be sadly missed.

☞The Mohawk Drama Festival at Union College, Schenectady, should be a stimulus to the book-trade in that region. Dr. Thomas H. Dickinson is in charge of the curriculum and Mr. and Mrs. Coburn and their company will perform in an open-air theatre on the campus. ☞Pleased to note that Don Marquis's play about Henry VIII, *Master of the Revels*, will be given its premiere at the Mohawk Festival, August 13. ☞Old outspoken Q. is always glad when a publisher utters his honest thoughts: e.g., Mr. John Macrae's recent letter about Algernon Blackwood. "Blackwood's last book, *Dudley and Gilderoy*," says Mr. Macrae, "largely lies on my shelves and in the bindery because critics and readers were so busy with the material things of life back in 1929 . . . fifty years from now some critic will dig up *Dudley and Gilderoy* and the public of that time will proclaim this book." ☞We learn from the *Haverford News* that the termites ("small, blind social insects") have attacked the library of Haverford College; which shows their good taste. ☞The creatures have a passion for intellectual improvement. ☞Old Q., who is building himself a library in the woods of Long Island, worries sometimes about termites. Have they got as far North as this? ☞Prof. G. R. Vowles of Davidson College, North Carolina, issues a very interesting pamphlet *What Do the Germans Read?* He tabulates the choices during the past 7 years of the Deutsche Buch-Club of Hamburg which corresponds to our own Book-of-the-Month Club. Of the 84 books distributed 1928-34 by the German club, 4 were American works and 4 English. American authors: Berge-Lanier (*The Pearl Diver*), Upton Sinclair (*Boston*), Edna Ferber (*Cimarron*), and Pearl Buck (*Sons*). The 4 English authors represented were D. H. Lawrence, Joseph Conrad, Michael Arlen, Harold Nicolson. ☞"Since Schlegel and Tieck," says Prof. Vowles, "the Germans have been excellent translators and receptive to literary works from beyond their borders."

☞Our colleague W. R. B. noted some weeks ago the fact that a London publishing house has the amusing name of Fudge & Co. Our own favorite is the London bookbinders G. and J. Kitcat Ltd., whom we encounter as the binders of the English edition of *Romanoff*, an exciting story about the Russian Imperial Navy—to be issued here presently by Longmans Green.

☞This week Miss Ellen Ennis of the Lord & Taylor Book Shop, New York City, has had on display one of the $20,000 copies of Colonel Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*—"chained to a table," says Doubleday's press release. ☞Mr. Eddie Ziegler was telling the Three Hours for Lunch Club of the elaborate mixture of publicity and precaution arranged by the publisher for these rare copies. "You've only forgotten one thing," said Mr. Mitchell Kennerley. "What's that?" asked Mr. Ziegler anxiously.—"You haven't arranged to have one stolen." ☞July 12 was the Annual Field Day of the Chicago Bookmen, at the Kildeer Country Club. We haven't heard from Ralph Henry, chairman of the committee, whether that date was as hot as it was in N. Y. If so, it was a good day for Thomas Collins.

☞Mr. Jack Fraser, the chrysostom of the John C. Winston Company (Philadelphia) writes with justifiable pride of the grand preface by William McFee in Armstrong Perry's *All Sail Set*—a story of a boy's adventures in shipyard and at sea with the noble old clipper *Flying Cloud*. This is a Must book for all who have a hanker to windward for salt water. ☞"Sea literature," Mr. McFee remarks, "is entering upon a new lease of life." And he adds, of a certain chapter in Mr. Perry's book, "one of the most convincing pieces of realism I have read during a number of years of reading sea literature." ☞Mr. McFee's own new novel, *The Beachcomber* (announced for August) begins just as we like our sea-tales to do: a night of pouring rain down in the Erie Basin (Brooklyn) and Mr. Spenlove, the engineer, in reminiscent mood. ☞Speaking of such matters, we were delighted to get a letter from C. R. W. Jr. (Baltimore) asking if we are familiar with the classic old *Wrinkles in Practical Navigation* by S. T. S. Lecky (published by D. Van Nostrand). Gracious, Lecky's *Wrinkles* has long been one of our fifteen or twenty most favorite books: we always wanted to reproduce his picture of himself showing the lady passenger the Southern Cross, but perhaps it would scarcely come out in photogravure. ☞All the Leckies, with 3 initials, were good writers: does anyone remember William Edward Hartpole Lecky who wrote the Histories of Rationalism and of European Morals? He spotted the "Declining Sense of the Miraculous" before any of the present generation of tripers were born. ☞In spite of all the hard work done by M. Lincoln Schuster on his photo-album *Eyes of the World* he has found time to continue his enthusiastic reading. "Have you read *An Almanac for Moderns* by Donald Culross Peattie?" he asks. "I choose my words deliberately when I say that virtually every page is stamped with greatness. This is the sort of book you should proclaim."

☞The picture of James Hanley on the cover of this issue is reproduced by courtesy of Captain L. H. Cohn of the House of Books, who got it from Mr. Hanley and kindly lent it to us.

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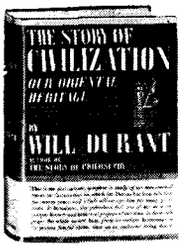


Even before *The Story of Philosophy* won world renown, DR. WILL DURANT had determined to consecrate twenty-five years of his life, perhaps more, to a vastly conceived *Story of Civilization*. It is *The Inner Sanctum's* privilege now to publish the first volume of this series, independent in itself, under the title, *The Story of Civilization—I. Our Oriental Heritage*.

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The search for the origins of Greek culture led to the Near East, and he found himself finally fascinated by the civilizations of Egypt, India and China. He began to collect material for the book twenty years ago and, with the publication of *The Story of Philosophy*, found himself able to give more and more time to it. Since 1927 he has been working steadily on *The Story of Civilization*, devoting two round-the-world trips and consecrating himself to primary research and study with a fervor truly impassioned.

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—ESSANDESS

**THEY**

**SHOOT HORSES,**

**DON'T THEY?**

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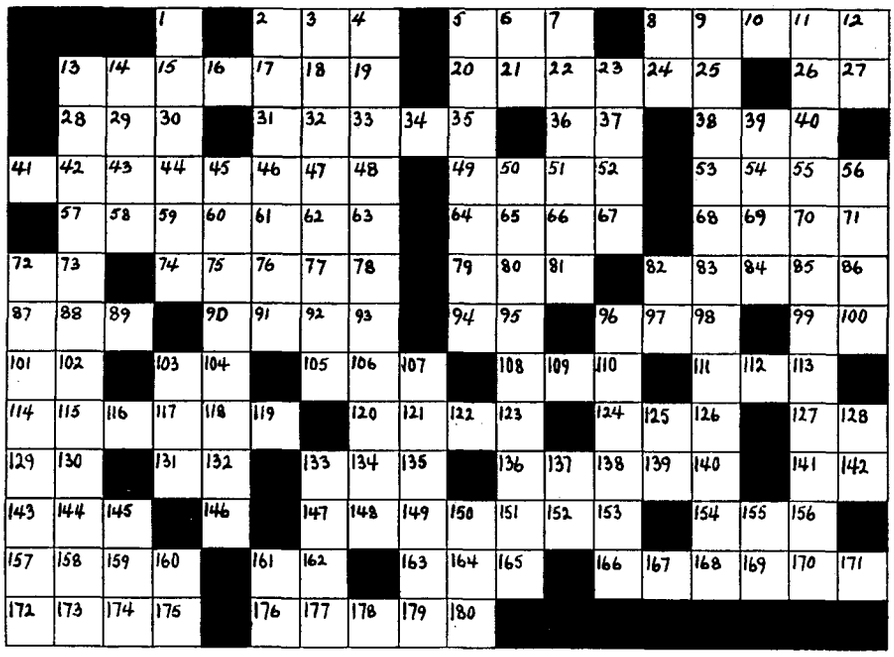
# Double-Crostics: No. 69

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



**DIRECTIONS**

*To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find by reading (from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.*

*When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.*

**The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 20 of this issue.**

**DEFINITIONS**

I. Italian composer (1879—)

II. Gaping, clamorous (comp.).

III. Hydraulic reaction.

IV. To insert.

V. Chemical compound.

VI. Superficial (comp.).

VII. Any instrument of eight strings.

VIII. Bunch of flowers.

IX. A judge in Israel (Biblical).

X. Charitable.

XI. Stealthy, sly.

XII. Wanting firmness.

XIII. Devotee of the beautiful.

XIV. Celebrated lexicographer.

XV. Book by Rider Haggard.

XVI. Ancestor of the Hittites.

XVII. Solemn lyric.

XVIII. Makes excessively warm.

XIX. To reduce in value.

XX. Upper canines.

XXI. English poet (1631-1700).

XXII. Lying beneath.

XXIII. To puff up, distend.

XXIV. Foolish, silly (slang).

XXV. Incompletely thought out (comp., colloq.).

XXVI. Lachrymose.

**WORDS**

160 30 25 77 146 140 39 171

26 82 98 95 123 71 138 163 50 126 113

68 159 59 34 53 101 89 164

87 112 130 143 120

118 60 5 31 80 49 165

145 109 1 139 153 122 67 147

131 33 38 46 179 134 103 168 81

16 117 169 61 99 85 12

127 180 176 155 133 106 111 29

19 172 128 107 86 137 35 102 150 51 72 76

27 91 55 96 23 166 135

37 173 57 90 20 83

167 108 18 41 177 52 9

142 161 13 69 28

175 64 42

125 7 105 79

21 44 73

32 11 56 100 6 144 43 129 2

48 115 70 92 15 154 65

152 110 158 78 4 174 63 121

119 66 157 88 156 62

58 24 151 8 74 84

17 47 104 148 170 141 3

75 36 94 162 116

97 149 45 132 114 10 93 40 22

124 54 178 14 136

## The New Books

(*Continued from page 19*)

through Lord Chesterfield's "Letters," and to show how they reflect the social ideals of each successive age. The majority of them are really very wise interpretations of ways of life, planned to inculcate in their readers highmindedness and true gentility rather than just the veneer of gentlemanly manners. Certainly they are a valuable commentary upon the ages which they represent, and it is by no means inconceivable that they did a great deal to make man more conscious of the higher ends of living than he might otherwise have been. Mr. Mason has constructed a very useful book, which is full of information accurately and logically presented. If it is slow and difficult reading, that is only because its materials are of so general and so inclusive a nature as to demand the full scholarly apparatus of reference and authority.

C. D. A.

*PRINCE WILLIAM'S PARISH AND PLANTATIONS. By John R. Todd and Francis M. Hutson. Richmond Garret and Massie.* $25.

This beautiful volume preserving the records of a part of the Carolina lowlands rich in history owes its publication to the interest of John R. Todd, of New York, in a region which has captured whoever has visited it. Beaufort County saw the efforts of Spaniards, Frenchmen, and English to colonize and hold its fair Sea Islands and river lands; then it became the seat of the greatest of plantations in the South's antebellum planter aristocracy. Now most of its ancient rice fields, live oaks, and marshes are owned by the Northerners (a witty Charlestonian remarked "In 1864 the devil sent the Yankees—now God sends them."). The old plantation manor houses are few, for fire consumed them, but the visitor still is surrounded by ample evidence that a pleasant civilization flourished here.

The famous plantation names of Tomotley (its avenues of live oaks are unequalled) Brewton Twickenham, Hobonny, Rose Hill, Newberry, Bonny Hall, Clay Hall, Nieuport, and others are the theme of this volume, and a detailed story of each one is given. The copies of old land grants maps are interesting records, and the photographs are excellently chosen.

C. McD. P.

## Travel

*RIDING THE MUSTANG TRAIL. By Forrester Blake. Scribners.* 1935. $2.50.

Within a day of Chicago lies the Great Southwest, a vast territory, larger in area than some important European countries, that was settled by Europeans long before the Pilgrims made their celebrated landing. Americanism has conquered only a strip along the bleak trail that hurries through the wastes to the fertile expanses beyond, while back in the mountains the descendants of the Spanish conquerors speak the language of their forefathers, name their first born Jesus and Mary, and hunt wild turkeys in the primeval forests as of yore. The Indians in their mud-built villages who withstood the cultural shock

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of the Spaniards, likewise resisting well-meant instruction thrust down their throats by a paternal government, have remained as unchanged as the sunbaked mesas on their skybound plains.

This wonderland has been the inspiration of several widely-read novels of recent years, but in all that we can recall the background has had a bit of the gaudiness and implausibility of the painted scenery of the stage. It has remained for the young author of "Riding the Mustang Trail" (he has barely entered his twenties) in his account of a summer's experience in herding a drove of wild horses to give an authentic picture and fix a bit of the atmosphere of this region.

He has set down nothing but his day-to-day adventures on a journey with four companions; he writes of no events more exciting than breaking a bronco, encountering rattlesnakes at close quarters, or a prairie storm, but one reads with confidence and finishes with a laugh or little thrill. The glimpses he gives of the cowboy, the sheepherder, the dryfarmer, products of the country as peculiar as the sagebrush and the cactus and with a philosophy as incomprehensible as Chinese music, have a sympathetic and genuine ring. The book will be enjoyed by those who know the simple life and no less by those who do their roughing vicariously.

W. K.

**CHINESE PROVERB: If a horse gets no wild grass he never becomes fat; if a man does not receive lucky help he never becomes rich—I am seeking a $20,000 personal loan; details on request. . . . Yes! I wrote the novel BACHELOR'S DAUGHTER recently published by DORRANCE. Hubert Madere, Hahnville, Louisiana.**

## PERSONALS

*ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 7 cents per word, including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.*

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## PERSONALS

**X-Y-Z.** See this column, June 22 issue, re mix-ups. I "sort of like to chat" also, but this *method expensive and time-consuming.* I'm NOT YAWNING. P-Q-H.

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## PERSONALS

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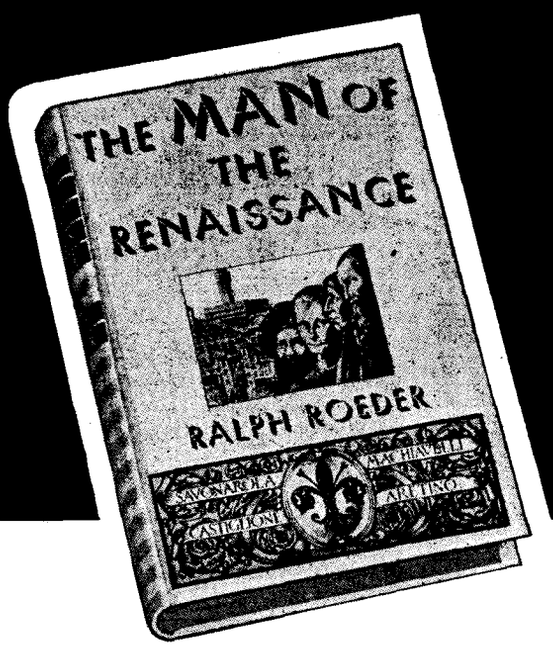


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